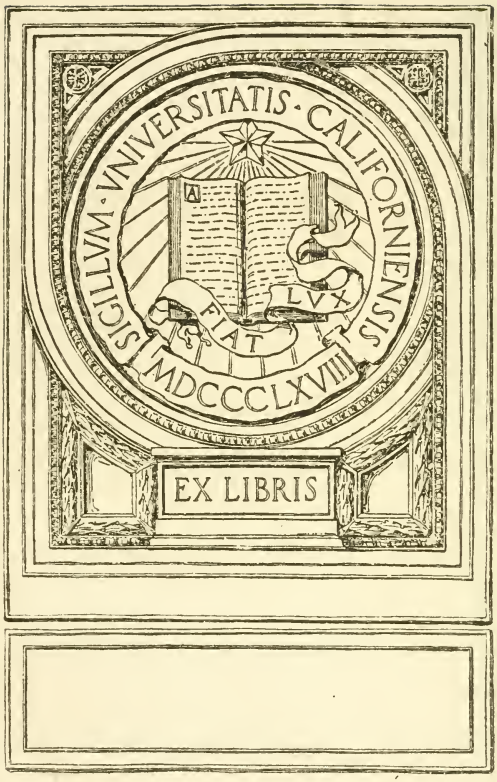
MEMOIRS OF THE DUC DE LAUZUN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The Court Series of French Memoirs

MEMOIRS OF THE DUC DE LAUZUN

IN THE GARDENS OF FONTAINBLEAU.

MEMOIRS OF THE DUC DE LAUZUN

(Armand Louis de Gontaut, duc de Biron)
1747-1783.

Translated from the French by
E. Jules Méras

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INTRODUCTION

THE Memoirs which follow are those of the Don Juan, the incarnation of the frivolous, elegant, blasé society of his time. They are the Memoirs of Lauzun, "handsome Lauzun," "divine Lauzun," "brave Lauzun," "witty Lauzun," "mad Lauzun,"— as he was variously called by his contemporaries,— the Lauzun known through his own claims and the gossip of the times as a "favourite of Marie Antoinette."

Armand Louis de Gontaut, first known as the comte de Biron, was the last descendant of an illustrious house. On him, when he was born, rested the last and very feeble hope of old maréchal de Biron, who, father of four sons, dead or without posterity, ran the risk of seeing die out the name he had so gloriously borne.

In the little which Lauzun tells us of his childhood and youth we see enough to explain what later followed. We see him, from his youngest

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day, thrust into a company without morals, even without scruples, cast into the very midst of royal corruption. It is at Versailles, in the circle of the King's favourite, Mme. de Pompadour, that Lauzun grew up. His father was an intimate friend of the marquise who liked his gentle manners and his lively humour.

Could good possibly be the result of such surroundings? Had the result been different from what it really was, might it not be looked upon in the light of a miracle?

Lauzun was born in Paris, April 13, 1747 and died there December 31, 1793. Handsome, endowed with brilliant intellectual qualities, surrounded by all the prestige which birth and fortune can give, he became a part of that frivolous, gay, witty, corrupt society of which that of the Regency was the model and which was to continue its sway — though not so openly — through the reign of the unhappy Louis XVI, and finally come to a terrible and bloody end during the Revolution. After a most stormy youth, details of which fill his Memoirs, Lauzun went to America, where he took part in the war for independence,

and signalised himself by his brilliant valour and his chivalrous conduct. At the end of the war (1783) he returned to France. His uncle, the maréchal, having died in 1788, he inherited the title of duc de Biron; but he was unable to obtain the reversion of the old maréchal's place as colonel of the *Gardes*. The year 1789 saw him elected deputy of the nobility of Quercy to the States-General. As a deputy he warmly declared himself in favour of the Revolution. Appointed general of the army of Italy, the conquest of the county of Nice was one of his first successes. Sent after that to Vendée, he took Saumur from the Vendeans and defeated them at Parthenay. But Lauzun had been one of the intimates of the duc d'Orléans (Philippe Egalité), he was a noble by birth, he was noted for his humane tendencies. These were grievous faults in the estimation of the Jacobins. Denounced before the Convention, sentenced to death by the Revolutionary tribunal, the approach of death could not for a moment shake his courage. When they came to get him at the prison, the executioner found him eating a dozen oysters and drinking white wine. "Citi-

zen," said he, " allow me to finish." Then, offering him a glass, he added: " Take this wine; you must need courage in your profession." And Lauzun went to his death with a smile on his lips.

The Memoirs of the duc de Lauzun end with the account of his return from America. No doubt they were written then and he found no time later, to complete them. They were written by him at the solicitation of a woman, Mme. la duchesse de Fleury — some say Mme. de Coigny — and, it has been claimed by his partisans, were not intended for the public, but for a very dear friend and as a sort of confession. Be that as it may they were made public for the first time in 1822.

As to Lauzun's relations with Marie Antoinette it is difficult to decide as to the truth of his claims. Some of his contemporaries have confirmed it; others have denied it vehemently. Yet to-day when we know his conceited character, his fatuity, what he says with regard to the unfortunate Queen's conduct towards him may still retain some malignity, but should not be credited. One

sees in it only the false and contemptible insinuations of a presumptuous fellow disappointed in his hope, and whose wounded vanity seeks a vengeance unworthy of a gallant man.

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CHAPTER I

MEMOIRS
OF THE DUC DE LAUZUN

CHAPTER I

(1744–1767)

My life has been filled with events so strange, and I was, from my early years, a witness to such important happenings, that I think it well to leave these memoirs to those who are dear to me. They are written but for them, for it would be a hard matter for me to put them in the order necessary to a work destined to be judged by the public. I shall write but the truth. I shall frequently retrace my steps, my narration shall scarcely have more consistency than had my conduct formerly, and I shall be seen successively a gallant, a gambler, a politician, a soldier, a hunter, a philosopher, and often more than one thing at the one time.

HARVARD

I must here make mention to those who will read this of the character of my father, M. le duc de Gontaut;[1] he was a perfectly good man, with a sympathetic and charitable heart, and of a frank devotion. He had not much wit, and still less education, but a just and upright sense, a wide knowledge of the world and of the court; very good taste, a noble and agreeable manner of expression, a great natural gaiety, much dislike for intrigue, and a cautious ambition had made of him an amiable man and much sought after. A serious wound, which he received at the battle of Ettingen, served him as an honest pretext for leaving the service. Lieutenant-general, he settled at the Court, became the intimate friend of Mme. de Châteauroux and consequently admitted to the King's familiar circle. The assiduous care he took of her during the illness from which she died increased his credit the more, and after the coming of Mme. de Pompadour at Court, he was on as good terms with her as with the former favourite. The kindly use he made of his influence caused him to be generally beloved, and I have seen few men who had less enemies.

It was therefore at Court, and one might say on the knees of the King's mistress, that the early years of my childhood were spent. The difficulty in finding a good tutor for me induced my father to confide the place to a lackey of my late mother, who knew how to read and to write passably, and on whom was conferred the title of *valet de chambre* to give him more importance. I was given besides masters in all branches; but M. Roch (this was the name of my mentor) was not capable to direct their lessons, and to give me the means of profiting by them.

He contented himself with imparting to me his talents for writing, of which he was very vain, and succeeded fairly well in this, as he did also in teaching me to read aloud, more fluently and agreeably than is usually done in France. This small talent made me almost necessary to Mme. de Pompadour, who made me read and write for her continually, and sometimes even for the King.

Our trips to Versailles became more frequent, and my education more neglected. I was, in other respects, like all the children of my age and kind: the prettiest clothes to go out, naked and dying of

hunger at home. At twelve years of age I was entered in the regiment of the guards, of which the King promised me the reversion, and I knew at that age that I was destined to an immense fortune and to the finest position in the kingdom, without giving myself the trouble of being a good subject.

M. le comte de Stainville and my father had married sisters (I am the son of the elder, who died at my birth). This marriage had brought them into close intimacy, and my father's credit with Mme. de Pompadour had successively caused his brother-in-law to be appointed ambassador to Rome, and to Vienna, had caused him to be made a duke, *cordon bleu* and finally Minister of Foreign Affairs, in which office the charm of his intellect and of his talents soon acquired for him an absolute empire over Mme. de Pompadour, and soon after over the King.

M. le duc de Choiseul had a sister who was canoness of Remiremont,[2] whose sole fortune was her prebend, but who combined with all the attractions of her sex the character of a man fit for great things and great intrigues; he took

her to his home. Mlle. de Choiseul was homely, but with that homeliness which generally pleases; she could be called with reason a *desirable* woman. It was not long before she wanted to rule her brother, but, in order to keep up this part without danger, credit, position, were necessary, and she had none. It was therefore requisite to seek a marriage and a husband who would satisfy both her self-respect and her security. She cast her eyes on M. le duc de Grammont, a man without character, incapable of doing anything, interdicted for some years past, and spending his time in a little house near Paris, with musicians and girls. Nothing could better suit Mlle. de Choiseul, since nothing would be more easy than to return M. le duc de Grammont where she had found him as soon as he became a burden to her. My father took up the matter; the interdiction was raised, and the marriage took place.

I was then fourteen years of age, and a rather handsome child. Mme. la duchesse de Grammont took the greatest liking to me, intending, I believe, to make for herself a little lover who

would be truly hers and without ill consequences; her credit or rather her empire over M. le duc de Choiseul increased daily. Mme. la duchesse de Choiseul,[3] who loved her husband to distraction, became jealous of this excessive affection, and, in a few months, the two sisters-in-law had fallen out; my father, with his usual moderation, found a way not to espouse either cause, and of remaining on good terms with both. I was fortunate enough to follow his example; but I must confess to my shame that I followed my inclination, and gave, in my heart, all preference to Mme. la duchesse de Grammont, who was very grateful to me for it. At that time she took me to Menars,[4] to Mlle. Julie, Mme. de Pompadour's *femme de chambre,* who had her entire confidence, and who already had become a most important personage. She conceived the idea that what her mistress kept to herself might perhaps be much to her fancy; she made me many useless advances, for I was quite innocent. Yet I had no greater pleasure than to meet her and to be with her. My occupation was noticed by M. Roch, who with much address, without af-

fectation, forbade me all intercourse with Julie; I was much grieved at this.

A more interesting event made me forget it, or at least was for me a powerful distraction. M. le duc de Choiseul, having become Minister of War through the death of M. le maréchal de Bellisle, appointed to the rank of lieutenant-general, in the service of France, M. le comte de Stainville, his younger brother, an officer of note and who was then major-general in the service of the Emperor. He possessed nothing; but his brother's favour and the King's good offices assured him an advantageous marriage; the one considered was Mlle. de Clermont-Reynel, who combined a large fortune with a charming face, and who was not yet fifteen. All was settled while M. de Stainville was still with the army; winter came. Orders were sent him to return, and he was married six hours after his arrival in Paris.

I saw Mme. de Stainville for the first time on her wedding day, and she made an impression on me which since then has been effaced with difficulty; I immediately fell in love with her; and

jests which were indulged in made her aware of this; she was moved at it; but she was too carefully guarded by Mme. la duchesse de Choiseul, her sister-in-law, who had taken her in charge, to permit of there yet being any danger in the situation. Mme. de Grammont, who did not like her younger brother, feared that the young woman might prove too attractive to M. le duc de Choiseul, who seemed engrossed in her, and was not sorry to give her an admirer. She therefore protected our budding love, and often had us come to her house together.

Mme. de Stainville said to me one day at dinner at Mme. de Choiseul's, that she would dine at Mme. de Grammont's on the following day, and that we might spend the day there. I was overwhelmed with joy; but M. Roch, who discovered it, and whose strict morality never belied itself, wanted, on the next morning, which happened to be a Sunday, that I should go to mass; I refused, we had an argument; he threatened to speak to my father, whom I feared very much, I yielding with great sorrow. He took me to mass at the *Petits-Pères,* where, choking with

anger and grief, I lost consciousness; and when I recovered, I found myself lying on the steps of the church, surrounded by old women. I was taken back to the house, which I reached rather pale. I said that I was ill, and I was compelled to go to bed. Mme. la duchesse de Grammont came to see me and brought Mme. de Stainville. I told her my story; she laughed at it, went to see my father, caused M. Roch to be scolded, and obtained permission to cure me and to take me to dinner at her house. That day was one of the happiest of my life. I spent it all with my young sweetheart, and almost always *tête-à-tête*. She showed me how touched she was at my tenderness, granted all the innocent favours I asked her, and I knew no other. I kissed her hands; she vowed that she would always love me; I wished for nothing in this world.

A long siege of the whooping-cough compelled her to remain in her room for six months. Admission to it was forbidden me; I saw her but seldom and never without Mme. de Choiseul. The physicians prescribed the waters of Cotterets, she was taken there in the spring, and she

returned in perfect health, at the beginning of the winter. She went much in society with Mme. la duchesse de Choiseul; she was a wonderful dancer. She had the most brilliant success at all the balls, was surrounded and admired by all the fashionables. She felt ashamed to have a child for a lover, cast me aside, treated me harshly, and took a liking to M. de Jancourt; I became jealous, shocked, despondent, but it profited me nothing.

My father at that time arranged my marriage with Mlle. de Boufflers, granddaughter and heiress to Mme. la maréchale de Luxembourg,[5] and consequently a most desirable match.

I was sorry at this, as the choice was not favoured by Mme. la duchesse de Grammont, who detested, with some reason, Mme. la maréchale de Luxembourg, and spoke very ill of her. I was to be allowed to see the person whom I was to marry; it was arranged that I should go to an afternoon dance at Mme. la maréchale de Mirepoix's; that Mlle. de Boufflers should dine there; that I should reach the house early, and should see her. I went, driven there at four

o'clock, and I found a charming young person, whom I fancied immensely, and whom I took to be my intended. Unfortunately I was mistaken, and it was Mlle. de Roth. I recognised my error with the greater sorrow, as Mlle. de Boufflers, who came out of the bed-chamber of Mme. la maréchale de Mirepoix, did not gain by comparison.

Mme. la princesse de Beauveau was at this dance with Mlle. de Beauveau. It is difficult to unite more charms, more natural sprightliness and attractiveness. I felt their full worth.

I met Mlle. de Beauveau at all the balls; I frequently saw her at Mme. la duchesse de Grammont's, with whom her mother was on intimate terms. I sought to please her; she accepted my attentions without reluctance; in all respects I preferred her to Mlle. de Boufflers. I wished to marry her; I mentioned the subject to Mme. de Grammont, who approved of my wishes. I had the courage of speaking to my father about it; he received me rather badly, told me that he had given his word, and that he intended to keep it. I however made up my mind not to be mar-

ried against my will. The attachment I showed to Mme. la princesse de Beauveau pleased her. And before leaving for a long trip which she had to take in Lorraine, she was kind enough to assure me that she was as anxious as I to see my projects crowned with success, and that it would not be her fault should they not succeed. Mlle. de Beauveau herself was pleased to let me hope that she would think of me during her absence. This voyage was long; and as it was about to come to an end, Mme. la princesse de Beauveau contracted the smallpox, and died of it. Mlle. de Beauveau returned to Paris at the end of a few months and was placed in the convent of Port-Royal. I had sincerely regretted Mme. de Beauveau; her loss had changed nothing in my intentions; I decided to know those of her daughter. I forwarded to her secretly, at the convent, a letter which I reproduce here in its entirety:

"I have not dared, mademoiselle, to trouble your grief by mine: you will do me the justice to believe that I have lost as much as you. My

father wishes me to marry, mademoiselle; but the more I feel that the alliance to Mlle. de Boufflers honours me, the more I consider its worth, the more I am convinced that we do not suit one another. There exists but one happiness for me, mademoiselle, the hope of being able to contribute to yours. I dare not ask my father to call upon M. le prince de Beauveau, before knowing if this step does not displease you. It is a question of an eternal bond, and it seems to me that you may grant or refuse me the permission I ask of you, and yet keep within the bounds of the most exacting propriety. I await your reply, mademoiselle, with much more agitation and impatience than if only my life were at stake.

"I am, with the most profound respect, mademoiselle, your very humble and most obedidient servant.

"Le comte de Biron*."

Mlle. de Beauveau's governess received my letter, read it before giving it to her.

"I should perhaps not give you this letter,"

* Name borne at that time by the duc de Lauzun.

she said to her; "but it contains matters so important for you that I consider it not only my duty to show it, but even give you permission to reply."

Mlle. de Beauveau re-sealed my letter, and returned it to me without a single word of reply; I was much hurt at a proceeding which I did not deserve; it determined me to promise my father to consent to the marriage he desired; to this I stipulated the condition that it would be delayed two years, and that I should have my freedom at once.

I took a fancy to a little actress of the Versailles theatre, aged fifteen, named Eugénie Beaubours, and more innocent than I, for I had already read some wicked books, and all I lacked was the opportunity to put into practice what I had learned from them. I undertook the instruction of my little mistress, who loved me too sincerely not to satisfy all my desires. One of her chums loaned us her room, or, to speak more truthfully, a small closet in which she slept, and which a bed and two chairs filled entirely. An enormous spider came to disturb our appoint-

ment; we were in mortal fear of it; neither one of us had the courage to kill it. We decided to separate, promising one another to meet in a cleaner place, and where there would be no such frightful monsters. My father heard of our intimacy, became alarmed, I know not why, and, that very week, had both the mother and daughter sent away.

Shortly after this, I attracted the attention of Mme. la comtesse d' Esparbès, a cousin of Mme. de Pompadour, tiny, pretty and gay; she uselessly made me many advances which I failed to notice; I was finally flattered at the distinction with which she treated me, and I fell in love with her. One day when the King was dining in the apartments of Fontainebleau, with Mme. de Pompadour and but a few guests, I had dinner in town with Mme. d' Esparbès and Mme. d' Amblimont, another cousin of Mme. de Pompadour. Mme. d' Amblimont went to her room after dinner to write some letters. Mme. d' Esparbès, on the pretext of a headache, went to bed; I discreetly wanted to leave; but she told me to remain, and requested me to read her a short

comedy, called "Fortunately," which we had acted together; and, since then, she called me her *little cousin.*

"Little cousin," said she to me, after a few minutes, "this book bores me; sit on my bed and let us talk; that will amuse me more."

She complained of the heat and uncovered herself much. My head was going around, I was all afire, but I feared to offend her; I dared not risk anything, I contented myself with kissing her hands and looking at her with an avidity which did not displease her. She told me several times to be good, to make me notice that I was too much so. I followed her advice to the letter. She however permitted me to caress and to kiss her, and vainly hoped I would become bolder. When she felt quite certain of my imbecility, she told me rather coldly to go away; I obeyed without protest, and had hardly left the room when I repented of my timidity, and promised myself to make better use of my time, should the occasion again present itself.

I saw Mme. d' Esparbès again at Versailles; I offered her my arm one evening, on leaving

Mme. de Pompadour's apartment, after dinner. She wished to send me away as soon as I reached her room.

"One moment," said I to her; "my beautiful cousin, it is not late; we might talk. I might read to you, if I bore you."

My eyes shone with a light she had not yet seen in them.

"I am willing," said she; "but on condition that you will be as good as you were the first time; step into the other room; I am going to disrobe; you will return as soon as I shall be in bed."

I returned after a few minutes. I sat down on her bed without her making any objections.

"Read," said she to me.

"No; I have so much pleasure in seeing you, in looking at you, that I would be unable to see a single word printed in the book."

My eyes devoured her; I let the book fall; I disturbed without much opposition the handkerchief which covered her throat. She was about to speak to me, my mouth closed her own. At break of day she had me leave her apartments

with the greatest mystery. The following day I was awakened by this note:

"How did you sleep, my gentle little cousin? Did you dream of me? Do you wish to see me again? I am obliged to go to Paris to do a few errands for Mme. de Pompadour; come to have a cup of chocolate with me before I leave, and specially to tell me that you love me."

This attention charmed and seemed to my mind as if devised for me. I was very sorry not to have forestalled Mme. d' Esparbès; I hardly took time to dress, and I hastened to her house. I was delighted. I liked Mme. d' Esparbès very much, and my self-conceit was infinitely flattered to have a sweetheart. I was courteous enough not to speak of it, but it caused me inexpressible pleasure to have people guess it; and in that respect she gave me all possible satisfaction, for she treated me in a manner which proclaimed the truth to all. A cockade on which she had embroidered her name, which I wore at the King's review, published my triumph, which was

not of long duration, for in the course of the summer she turned to M. le prince de Condé. I was grieved, shocked, I threatened; all was useless. She sent me my full discharge worded as follows:

" I am sorry, monsieur le comte, that my conduct should anger you. It is impossible for me to change this, and even more so to sacrifice to your whim the persons who displease you. I trust that the public will judge of the attentions they bestow upon me with less severity than you. I trust that you will forgive, because of my frankness, the wrongs of which you believe me guilty. Many reasons, which it would take too long to enumerate, compel me to request you to make your visits less frequent. I have too good an opinion of you to fear the ill behaviour of so courteous a man.

" I have the honour of being, etc. . . ."

I asked for a last appointment, which was granted me without difficulty. Mme. d' Esparbès appeared to me so calm that I remained confounded.

"You wished to see me," she said. "In a similar circumstance, anyone else would have refused your request; but I considered that I owed some advice to the interest which an old acquaintance always inspires. You are, in truth, an unusual child; your principles, your way of looking at things lack common sense. Believe me, my little cousin, to be romantic is no longer the fashion: it makes one ridiculous and nothing else. I had quite a liking for you, my child, and I am not to blame if you mistook it for a *grande passion,* and if you feel that it should have had no end. What is it to you, if that fancy has passed away, that it should have turned to another, or if I remain without a lover? You have many accomplishments to please women: take advantage of these, and be convinced that the loss of one can always be repaired by another; this is the way to be happy. You are too courteous to be guilty of any meannesses towards me, they would turn more against you than against me. You have no proof of what has occurred between us, you would not be believed; and if you were, to what extent do you think it would interest the

public If the public ever knew that I had won you, it never expected that I would keep you eternally. The date of our separation is of the greatest indifference to them. Besides, the bad opinion and the suspicion of the other women would avenge me of you, if you were capable of improper proceedings. The advice I give you must prove that interest and friendship survive the sentiments which I had for you."

I was embarrassed, and I cut a rather sorry figure: protestations, awkward compliments. . . . She drew me out of my embarrassment by ringing for her maids to dress her. I remained a few moments more and then left.

After some time I became reconciled to my misfortune.

The death of Mme. de Pompadour was the first interesting event of my life; my attachment for her and her tender friendship for me rendered her loss irreparable; I became acquainted during her illness with M. le prince de Guéménée, and contracted a friendship that nothing has been able to alter, and which will certainly endure as long as we both do. Serious lung trouble which

lasted more than one year prevented me from thinking of anything else than my health, until it was restored.

M. le prince de Tingry-Montmorency[6] married again in 1765 and took Mlle. de Laurens, a stout girl, strong, ruddy, of about twenty years, and who looked to be thirty. A good sort of person, gay and fond of pleasure, associating very much with M. le chevalier de Luxembourg,[7] nephew of M. de Tingry; I was often at her relative's and I frequently had the opportunity of seeing Mme. de Tingry; I caught her fancy and noticed it; I rather liked her, and nothing would have been easier than to become the master of an excellent establishment. Mme. de Tingry possessed but little intelligence, and much less knowledge of the manners of polite society. It was not very difficult to penetrate her thoughts, and the liking she had for me was soon noticed by everybody. I followed her to the country where we acted in comedy; I praised her talent, and was in great favour; she was the cause of a pleasantry which I should not repeat had it not made so great a noise.

The marquis de Gesvres [8] had a country house at Fontainebleau in which he had given a very poor apartment to Mme. la duchesse d' Havré; Mme. de Tingry being unable to induce him to be courteous and to give up his own, told us that we should prevent him from entering his residence; we went to wait for him in the evening at a house where he had dined; we stopped his chaise, seized him, transferred him to a cabriolet, and took him to the middle of the forest of Fontainebleau, where we affectionately advised him to give in gracefully and to surrender his apartment to Mme. d' Havré; [9] he declined to consent to this, we continued our drive, assuring him that we should travel until he had given us the mark of friendship which we asked of him; we took fresh horses, at a post called Bouron, at two leagues from Fontainebleau; he attempted to rebel, but we easily persuaded the people of the house that he was one of our relatives, suddenly become insane, whom we were taking to Provence, to the château of Saint-Cyprien, where he was to be confined. This story was so successful, that in a half hour the postillions claimed that they had

seen him running on the rack in the stable. At a quarter of a league from the post, he promised us all we asked and we drove him back. The expedition was composed of M. le duc d' Havré, the marquis de Royan, father of the chevalier de Luxembourg, of M. le prince de Guéménée, and myself; two were in the cabriolet with M. de Gesvres, and the others on horseback. We were not on bad terms when we separated from him, but his valet assured him that he must feel greatly offended, and he urged M. le duc de Trêmes, his father, to complain to the King.[10]

Scolded within two hours' time by all those who had any right to do so, I thought it best to go to Paris and await the outcome of this prank. A few hours after reaching there, I received a letter from my father, which informed me that it was decided that we should all be cast into the Bastille, and that I should probably be arrested during the night. I desired to at least finish matters gaily and I invited a few pretty chorus girls to supper, to await the police officer without impatience. Seeing that he did not come, I courageously made up my mind to go to Fontaine-

bleau and hunt with the King; he did not speak throughout the entire hunt, which so established our disgrace that we were refused greetings on our return. I was not discouraged. I appeared at Court that evening; the King came to me. "*Vous êtes tous de bien mauvaises têtes,*" said he, "*mais de bien drôles de corps;* come and have supper with me and bring along M. de Guéménée and the chevalier de Luxembourg." Everything changed and we again found the consideration which we previously had.

Mme. la duchesse de Grammont was again taking an interest in me, and was rather busy about my person. Mme. de Stainville was daily becoming more pretty, and M. le duc de Choiseul was noticing it; we were somewhat cold to one another; I had not forgotten the contempt with which she had treated me, and she noticed that I no longer deserved it, and that I was a rather handsome fellow, when M. de Stainville took a house in the faubourg Saint-Germain, and allowed her to go about alone.

The occupation and the attentions of Mme. la duchesse de Grammont did not escape Mme. de

Stainville; she showed me greater interest. She sent me word one day that a violent headache prevented her from going to dine at M. le duc de Choiseul's, and compelled her to remain at home. In the evening, out of pure politeness, I went to her residence to make enquiries as to her health; I did not expect to enter. I was told that she was at home, and I found her alone. She received me very pleasantly. We talked of indifferent matters for some little time.

"You are going to act a great part," said she, "and nothing in this world is so glorious as the conquest of Mme. de Grammont."

"I do not know what you mean," I replied, somewhat embarrassed; "you know that for some time Mme. de Grammont has shown marks of friendship towards me, and you can not suspect other sentiments in her."

"I ask pardon for my indiscretion," she resumed; "I notice it. The thought of the grief that such a happening would have caused me, and of the importance it would have had on my happiness, had I placed it in your hands, and if your promises never to change had persuaded me,

has too frequently returned to my mind, not to cause me to speak of it almost involuntarily."

"It is rather strange that you should reproach me for my frivolity, and that you should have forgotten that you thought yourself in love, and have disdainfully abandoned me, while I was not mistaken in my own sentiments, and saw how difficult it would be to cease adoring you."

"I admit that I have wronged you; I might, however, allege, as a justification, my youth, the power of the prejudices of my age at that time, and the fear of all the obstacles which appeared to rise between us; but I would rather confess in good faith that I acted improperly towards you; that I did not see you with the same eyes, and that I thought you less worthy of my affection."

Mme. de Stainville was far from being totally indifferent to me, and far from having lost the rights which a first passion always possesses over the heart; her speech embarrassed me.

"Well," said I, "what care you as to what becomes of me, and that another woman should prize a heart you have despised? Have you not

a lover? Did you spare me any of the torments which your fancy for M. de Jancourt can have caused me?"

"I shall not deny my intimacy with M. de Jancourt, Monsieur de Biron; he is nothing more to me; he lost too much in being compared to you. I have more than once regretted you, I have felt like telling you, your various *bonnes fortunes* stopped me. I did not consider any of your attachments serious, I hoped some day to reclaim my former rights with you which had been lost through my fault; but, I must confess it, my sister-in-law makes me anxious and frightens me. You see by my frankness the opinion I have of you, be as frank with me. Are you in love with Mme. de Grammont? Does interest for your fortune solely attach you to her?"

I was unable to reply immediately; strange emotions possessed me. I could not deny that I was flattered at being singled out by Mme. de Grammont, and to dispose of a person already celebrated, at whose feet the entire Court was to be found. On the other hand, never had Mme. de Stainville appeared to me as pretty, so

amiable. To answer was to choose; I at last broke the silence.

"I have loved you too much not to find pleasure in letting you read my heart. Mme. de Grammont has great claims on my gratitude; I should have had difficulty in proving this an hour ago; but I am only too conscious that an old wound is not yet healed, and that it has again opened. I should not care to be an ingrate, and yet prove to you that nothing is dearer to me than you are."

"I do not wish," said she, holding out the prettiest hand in the world, "that you should be an ingrate; but I wish to take upon myself the care of moderating the evidences of your gratitude. Friendship, consideration, deference, these things I permit towards my sister-in-law; the rest belongs to me. I shall be discreet and prudent. I wish to see, without exception, all that she writes to you, and know absolutely all that she says to you. I should not be so exacting and inquisitive, were I less loving."

All that youth can combine of grace and charms, the eyes of Mme. de Stainville offered

me. Mme. de Grammont was sacrificed; we were too much in love with one another, my mistress and I, to be as hard to penetrate as we thought ourselves. Mme. de Grammont was not long in perceiving what was taking place. She was too intelligent to show it; she contented herself with treating me coldly, and with taking a violent dislike to her poor little sister-in-law, bitter evidence of which she gave her to the end.

Having returned to Paris, Mme. de Stainville said to me one day: "We are even, my friend; you have an all-powerful rival, but not sufficiently so, however, to be preferred to you. M. le duc de Choiseul called this morning and placed at my feet his homage and his credit. In spite of my cold and severe replies, he was pressing. I did all I could to deprive him of all hope, and trust to be rid of him." She was mistaken; far from being discouraged, his persecutions increased. He became jealous of me; he tried to exact that she see me no more. She replied with firmness, that, whether he considered me her lover or her friend, nothing would change her sentiments, or cause her to give me up. M. de

Stainville also became jealous of me, forbade her absolutely to see me, and caused his door to be closed to me. A small box which we had in secret at the *Comédie Italienne* was the only place where we could meet, and yet it was not without danger. Her servants worshipped her. I had always been civil and generous towards them: they liked me very much also. Her head-porter told her maid that he would let me in at night, if she so wished, through a small stable door, without the knowledge of anyone. The proposition was accepted with joy, and had, on several occasions, no grievous outcome. Once, however, we were almost surprised, and this is how: Mme. de Stainville had left in the evening for Versailles, saying that she would remain there for two or three days. I had been informed of this at once, and I had arrived as soon as I thought everyone in the house abed. My toilet did not take long and I was in a moment in the arms and in the bed of my mistress; we were enjoying the most delicious pleasures with perfect security, when someone knocked loudly at the street door. Her frightened maid suddenly en-

tered the room. "All is lost," said she; "it is M. le comte! It is impossible to go through the court; go down quickly to the garden: you will be let out as best we can." I jumped out of bed in my shirt, and descended the stairs which led to the wardrobe, when I perceived M. de Stainville coming up. Fortunately, I did not lose my head. I extinguished the only light there was. He passed so close to me, that his coat touched my shirt, and that I was able to notice that it was embroidered. I reached the garden without accident, where I almost froze, for the day was beginning to appear before anyone came to my assistance. I went over the garden wall although it was quite high; but on landing in the street, I was arrested by the mounted watch, which took me for a thief. One hundred *louis* which I promised and for which I sent with clothes from my house, secured my freedom, and bought secrecy, which was in truth well kept. A few days after, we were surprised by one of her lackeys. Money, promises and threats once more got us out of a scrape. He asked for his discharge on the next day and I saw to it that he left Paris at once.

The date set for my marriage came. It took place on the 4th of February, 1766, and my father congratulated himself for having given me a wife who did not love me nor suit me, as if he had united two lovers who anxiously desired it. I went, after the ceremony, to Mme. la duchesse de Choiseul's, where I dined. Mme. de Stainville came there. We vainly sought to hide our sorrow. She went away early; I assisted her into her coach: this was not over prudent, but so necessary to us both, that I could not help doing it. "My friend," said she to me, on leaving, "I could no longer bear the insulting joy of M. de Choiseul; he hopes that you are going to attach yourself to the sullen child whom you have been forced to marry, and that I shall be but too glad to turn to him; but I should prefer death. Tell me that you will not change, for he has frightened me." I had not the time to answer; but a glance told her what was going on in my heart.

I lived quite decently, and even rather attentively with my wife, who showed me a coldness shocking to anyone who had possessed even less conceit than I did. I was too just to demand

affection from a woman who inspired me with none.

Mme. de Stainville occupied me solely and appeared every day to become more attached to me. The means of seeing one another were difficult, not daring to go near her house in the daytime. She wrote me one day to come at once, and to go through the little garden door: I reached the house with eagerness.

"M. le duc de Choiseul has asked me for an appointment," she said to me; "I want you to hear our conversation, so that you may judge for yourself on what terms we are; hide in this grilled closet where my dresses are, and do not move."

I was barely in the wardrobe than M. de Choiseul entered.

"I had a great desire, great need to see you alone, my dear little sister! I have many interesting things to tell you, things most important to you and to me. No one loves you as I do, my dear child, and no one is more desirous to prove it to you; judge then how grieved and shocked I must be at the cold and indifferent manner with

which you treat me, and how much food it must give me for reflection."

"I do not know, brother," she replied, "of what you complain; I am very sorry that my conduct should displease you; but I do not have to reproach myself for lacking in any of the sentiments which I owe you."

"As to that, no," he replied warmly, "for I am greatly in love with you, and nothing would be lacking to my happiness and to yours if you wished it."

"What would your brother say, should he hear you?" she interrupted, smiling.

"I know very well that it is not my brother who stops you; yes, my dear little sister, if you have no lover, I shall be yours."

He attempted to embrace her and she drew back.

"I have no lover, sir, and do not wish any."

"You will get over this beautiful resolution, my beautiful child."

He approached her again and attempted to lay his hand on her.

"I beg you to believe," she said with some

show of anger, "that if I should give myself up to a man, I should at least love him."

"Do not play the virtuous any longer, madame la comtesse, you have had M. de Jancourt, and you have at the present time M. de Biron; take heed of the last advice I am about to give you, for I shall not patiently suffer that you thus mock me; your young lover is an imprudent fellow and a fop; you will remember this day, and will both repent it."

"A moment's reflection, brother, will recall you to reason; and I can certainly have nothing rude to fear from you."

"Do not make an implacable enemy of a man who loves you to distraction, who, if you wish it, will do all that may please you, and for whom nothing is more easy than to ruin a rival so little worthy of him."

Again he attempted to touch her; she rose in anger.

"You are all-powerful, monsieur, I am not ignorant of it; but I do not and can not love you. M. de Biron is my lover, I admit it, since you force me to do so; he is dearer to me than all;

and neither your tyrannical power, nor all the harm you can do us, will make us give each other up."

He rose in a fury.

" Consider, madame, that nothing will save you from my vengeance, if this conversation is not buried in the deepest silence."

He left the room. Mme. de Stainville drew me from my prison and embraced me.

" I know not, dear heart," she said to me, " what the outcome of all this will be; but we are rid of him, and that in itself is a happiness. With love and courage, people may mock at everything."

M. de Choiseul learned, I know not how, that I had heard all, which brought on a state of fury which he concealed, but whose effects were not the less terrible.

One night, when I was leaving alone and on foot, the house of Mme. de Stainville, a man hidden behind a stone, near the Palais-Bourbon, rose and struck me a terrible blow with a club; fortunately it was lightened by the corner of my hat, and it glanced down on my shoulder. I drew

my sword and as well as I could judge in the darkness, stabbed my assailant rather deeply with it. Two other men came out from behind the stones, and came to the assistance of the first. A coach behind which were several lackeys carrying torches, put them to flight, and got me out of trouble. I followed the coach to the other side of the Pont-Royal.

The next day I went to report my experience to M. de Sartines, then lieutenant-general of police. He told me that I had probably been attacked by drunkards, and advised me not to speak of the matter. So many obstacles, so many dangers disturbed Mme. de Stainville. We began to see each other more rarely. Her liking for me lessened, and in a few months I was nothing more than a friend, but the tenderest of friends and almost as much as a lover can be. I felt her loss the less as I had been prepared to it by degrees.

The King made me a duke about that time, and, so as not to take either the name of my father or that of my uncles, I was called the duc de Lauzun.

I dined one evening at Mme. la maréchale de Luxembourg's, with Mme. la vicomtesse de Cambis, sister of M. le prince d'Hénin, with whom I was quite intimate. An elegant figure, wit, talents, charms, much art and coquetry made an agreeable woman of her. I was already sufficiently in fashion for her not to disdain to please me. I was rather successful with her and from the first instant we affected a tone of pleasantry. On duty at Versailles, where I was excessively lonesome, my idleness induced me to call on Mme. de Boisgelin, a monster of homeliness, but rather amiable and as gay as if she had been pretty; we spoke of Mme. de Cambis. "Let us ask her over," she said to me; "write her a line, I have good reasons to believe that she has a liking for you, and she will come." Only excess of extravagance and fatuity could excuse what I did. I wrote on a sheet of paper: "M. de Lauzun commands Mme. de Cambis to come and keep him company at Versailles, where he is on duty and dying of lonesomeness." To my great amazement, she arrived four hours after the departure of my note. One can easily imagine that after so much eager-

ness it did not take us long to come to an understanding.

Oh! for once I was notorious and my having Mme. de Cambis, for whom I cared very little, was a public matter.

I had not ceased to see Mme. de Stainville. A rather long absence with her husband in Lorraine, where he had a command, had cured him of his jealousy. Less attentive, I had naturally become less suspicious, and besides we no longer committed any imprudences; I however continued to take the liveliest interest in her. Finding her one day bathed in tears and in the most deplorable state, I pressed her so much to tell me what caused her grief, that she sobbingly confessed that she was in love with Clairval, the actor, and that he worshipped her. She had uselessly told herself a thousand times all that I was able to tell her against so disgraceful an attachment, and whose outcome could be only disastrous. I undertook to recall her to reason: I sermonized her, I tried to persuade her to give him up; she gave me promises which she did not keep. I was deeply grieved to see one so dear to me, go to ruin. I called on

Clairval; I made him appreciate all the dangers he ran and all those he caused Mme. de Stainville to run. I was pleased with his answers: they were noble and full of feeling.

"Sir," said he to me, "if I alone ran risks, a glance from Mme. de Stainville has paid for my life; I feel able to bear all for her, without complaining; but if her happiness, her peace of mind are in question, tell me what I should do, and be sure that I shall follow your suggestion."

Their intrigue was soon suspected. M. le duc de Choiseul and Mme. de Grammont did their best to secure information from me; I was faithful to the last; and neither caresses, nor menaces, were able to draw me out. I sought to frighten her with the awful storm which was gathering over her head, but this did not cause her to alter her conduct. She merely entrusted her papers in my care.

Such was the condition of things, when Lady Sarah Bunbury,[11] with her husband Sir Charles Bunbury, arrived in Paris. I was then on duty at Versailles, and did not see her at first. I owe

it to those who will read this to give some particulars regarding this charming woman.

Lady Sarah Lenox was the sister of the Duke of Richmond; she was tall, but somewhat stout, her hair of the most beautiful black; her complexion of dazzling whiteness and as fresh as a rose. Her eyes full of fire and expression announced the seductive and artless charm of her mind. The King of England had been passionately enamoured of her and wanted to marry her; but he lacked the courage to overthrow the obstacles which were opposed to this, and she had married a simple baronet of the county of Suffolk. Lady Sarah was good, sensitive, tender, frank and even hasty, but unfortunately a coquette and frivolous. I had been on duty at Versailles, for some days, when she arrived; and I had heard of her successes in Paris mentioned more than twenty times, when I saw her at the Temple for the first time, on my return from Versailles. I arrived during the concert; M. le prince de Conti came to meet me with his usual amiability, and led me to Lady Sarah: " I crave your kindness, my lady," said he to her, " for my good friend Lauzun; he

is very wild, very extravagant, very amiable; he will show you Paris better than anyone else. Permit me to present him to you. I am surety for his desire to please you."

A polite bow, a few words uttered between her teeth were Lady Sarah's sole reply.

I listened but little to the music: I approached all the ladies I knew. Mme. de Cambis called me twenty times, whispered to me, neglected nothing to convince everyone that I had the honour of belonging to her. The young men surrounded me. My opinion of the newcomer interested them: the greater number awaited it to settle upon their own, or at least to repeat it. I was beginning to be much in fashion; and without claiming to be an excellent original, I must admit that I had many copies and not one good. "She is not bad," I said, "but I see nothing to turn one's head. If she spoke good French and came from Limoges, no one would notice her." There was a general laugh at what I had said. The conceit of Mme. de Cambis, who heard it, was struck. "He is right," said she; "he is charming!" And behold! our poor lady was fallen. She had already

spoken to her of me as of a man whose attentions could be but flattering to a woman, and had not concealed the claims she had on him.

Dinner was announced: at the table, M. le prince de Conti made me sit between Lady Sarah and Mme. de Cambis,[12] which ended absolutely the triumph of the latter. I hardly noticed the displeasure which my excessive attention to the beautiful foreigner gave her: I thought of nothing else. I became acquainted with her husband; I did him favours which he appreciated, and I found means to become a friend of the house. I shortly after made a declaration: she appeared not to hear me, I wrote, the letter was returned to me, and I was told at the first opportunity, in tones quite indifferent and without anger:

"I am not seeking for a lover. Judge if I can have a French lover, who is worth more than ten by the noise he makes and the trouble he causes; and you above all, monsieur le duc, you do me too much honour. Do not lose your time around me; do not speak of love, if you do not wish me to close my door on you."

I was too seriously in love to be discouraged;

LADY SARAH BUNBURY.

I decided to keep silent and to wait for happier times.

Mme. de Cambis, annoyed at my neglect, wrote that I must choose between her and Lady Sarah, and give up one of the two. I did not take long to choose: I contented myself with making a package of her letters and returning them to her. That very evening she consoled herself of her loss by taking the chevalier de Cuigny, whom she knew that I did not like.

CHAPTER II

CHAPTER II

(1767–1768)

I WAS disturbed from my amours by one of the most awful events of my life, and whose outcome might have been more cruel than it really was. I have spoken elsewhere of the unfortunate passion of Mme. de Stainville for Clairval, the actor, and of the precaution she had taken to leave her papers in my keeping. They were in a closet which no one but myself entered, and whose key I kept in my pocket. This closet opened on the hôtel de Choiseul, in the next house to which I resided. A former valet of my father came to me one morning, and asked me if I kept much money in my closet. Gaming heavily, I told him that I did. "Well," said he, "take care, someone surely wishes to rob you; for I saw last night, on my way home, a man who was trying to pick the lock of the door leading to the hôtel de Choiseul; he ran away as soon

as he saw me, and I was unable to recognise him." I thanked him for the warning, and I spoke of it to no one. On my way down to Mme. de Lauzun's room in the evening, I said to one of my servants whom I could trust, to pretend to go up to my room, and to hide without light near the closet; to come down to Mme. de Lauzun's apartments, if he should hear any noise, and let me know; that I should leave the clothes-room door open. About an hour after I had retired, my man came to inform me that there was someone in my closet; I immediately went upstairs, taking with me a pair of pistols; I found in truth the door of my closet partly open; but it was very dark in there and I had no light: I could distinguish nothing. I called out twice: "Who is there?" but there was no response. A noise which I heard quite near me and the little light given by a few stars made me resolve to fire my pistol on what appeared to be a man. The rustle of a silk dressing gown which I heard at that moment made me stop in my purpose; and for my happiness! the idea came to me that it might be my father, although all appearances were against this. The

man, for it was one, pushed me violently, and fled successively closing all the doors on me, as he ran away by way of the hôtel de Choiseul, where I pursued and lost sight of him on hearing the door of my father's apartment close very noisily. One can easily imagine all the sad ideas that filled my head. I spent the night in this same closet and, the next day, I learned that Mme. de Stainville had left with her husband for Nancy, where she was to be confined in a convent by order of the King.[13]

My father sent for me. I found M. le duc de Choiseul in his apartment, who reproached me with having been in the confidence of Mme. de Stainville. I replied to him that there was a great difference between favouring someone's evil conduct and keeping one's secrets. He asked me for the letters deposited with me; I refused them with firmness; my father tried his authority, but with no greater success. Sharp things were said to me; my sharp answers were the more excusable on this account, and I left the room absolutely angry with both.

Deeply grieved at the troubles of Mme. de

Stainville, whom I loved as a sister, I did not leave my apartments for several days. I finally resumed my usual mode of life; but I experienced an impression of sadness difficult to dispel. Lady Sarah noticed it and spoke to me of it with interest.

"I am," I said to her, "as unhappy as it is possible to be, and I am losing, in a horrible manner, a very dear woman, and I shall never be anything for her whom I worship."

I told her my poor friend's melancholy story, at which she was much moved. I read in her eyes the most tender compassion: a visitor interrupted us; and she had only the time to tell me: "I dine this evening at Mme. du Deffand's."

Although I had not been at this Mme. du Deffand's for five or six years, I succeeded in having Mme. de Luxembourg, who was dining there also, to take me with her. The manners of Lady Sarah towards me were totally changed. Her eyes fixed on mine told me a hundred things which I dared not understand, and I thought her interest in me was solely due to pity. Her vivacity appeared moderated by a gentle languidness. Her abstraction had many charms for me since I had reason

to consider myself the cause of it. When everybody had left Mme. du Deffand's, she wrote a few words on a slip of paper, and said to me as we went down the stairs: " Read this on retiring."

One can readily imagine with what eagerness I returned home! I read these three English words: *I love you.* . . . I did not know a single word of English. It readily seemed to me that these words meant the same as our *je vous aime;* but I wished it too much to dare to flatter myself of its possibility. My night was spent in all sorts of reflections. At six o'clock in the morning, I hastened to go out and buy an English dictionary, which confirmed that I was beloved. One must have been as much in love as I was then to form an idea of my joy. I flew to Lady Sarah's, as soon as I could think her awake.

" I arose early," said she to me with a charming grace, " for I had no doubt but that you would come to have breakfast with me. Let us begin by having breakfast. Send away your cabriolet, which would show that you are here, for I wish to close my door to everyone, so that we may be able to have a talk together without being interrupted.

Sir Charles is at tennis, as well as Lord Carlisle, and they only return for dinner."

We had breakfast; she had her door closed, and the conversation which I am about to report began:

"I love you, monsieur de Lauzun, and seeing you so unhappy and so tender, I was persuaded that you loved me, and I was unable to resist the pleasure of relieving your troubles, by confessing that I loved you. A lover is ordinarily hardly an event in the life of a French woman; it is the greatest of all for an English woman: from this moment all is changed for her, and the loss of her existence and of her rest is commonly the end of a sentiment which in France has but an agreeable and but little dangerous outcome. This certainty however does not always stop them. Choosing our husbands it is less permissible in us not to love them, and the crime of deceiving them is never forgiven us. I shall add to that real remorse of being so ungrateful for the kindness of Sir Charles, whose principal occupation is my happiness. I have pleasure in telling you that I love you, but I am not the less convinced that we have nothing but misfortunes to expect from our love. Our na-

tions are always separated by the sea, and often by war. We shall spend the three-fourths of our lives without seeing each other, and our destiny will depend always on a letter going astray or being intercepted. We have everything to fear from Lord Carlisle; he has been in love with me for a long time, and he is reasonable, because he believes it impossible that I should have a lover, but jealousy will enlighten him promptly, and will make him capable of anything. I must also speak of my character: I am naturally a coquette; I shall sacrifice my coquetry to you with pleasure, if that depends on me; but your jealousy could render us both very unhappy. I have too good an opinion of you to give any consideration to the risk of surrendering my honour and my happiness to your probity and to your discretion; judge if I should, if I can have a lover!"

"I wish you to be happy," I replied to her, "but there is no power on earth which can hinder me from worshipping you."

We promised each other not to wander from the strictest circumspection and prudence, but our pledges were soon violated. Lady Sarah loved

me very much and granted me nothing. Our good faith, our gaiety, interested the public, which this time was most indulgent. Lord Carlisle kept silent, in the hope that Lady Sarah would forget me as soon as she should have left France. The date of her departure was approaching, and the fatal night finally came. Sir Charles Bunbury proposed to Lord Carlisle and to me that we accompany them a part of the way; we accepted, and on the first night we slept at Pont-Sainte-Maxence, near Chantilly. The remembrance of that evening will ever be with me; a single candle lit up a rather dark and dirty room, as usually are almost all French inns. Sir Charles was writing; Lord Carlisle, his head bowed on his two hands, appeared wrapped in the deepest meditation. An old English maid, who had brought him up, devoured me with looks of hatred that seemed to penetrate me. Lady Sarah was weeping, and in spite of all efforts a few tears were rolling down my own cheeks. I shared the same room as Lord Carlisle; he could no longer control himself and proposed that we should fight on our return to Paris. I was beloved; there was no merit in being

reasonable, and I replied with moderation, and yet expected that he would seek me out whenever he could, without compromising Lady Sarah. We separated at Arras. Lord Carlisle did not have the courage to leave a person so dear to him; he returned to England, instead of coming back to Paris, and travelling through Italy as he had planned. I think it well here to give the letter with which Lady Sarah entrusted me for M. le prince de Conti, and what she wrote me from Calais:

"You have been so good to me, Monseigneur, that it would be very wrong in me should I leave your charming country without thanking you. In truth, I did not believe it possible that I would be sorry to leave France, and that I should leave behind the better part of myself. Yes, Monseigneur, it breaks my heart to return to my own country, and to leave the only man I can love. Lauzun loves me more than anything on earth, and, very unhappy not to follow me, there is not a sacrifice he would not make. I tremble that he may come to England without permission and

that this act should have for him very dire consequences. Grant him your protection, Monseigneur, and that permission which will make me so happy. I shall be even more so in being indebted to you for this, for no one, Monseigneur, is more respectfully attached to you than your most humble and obedient servant.

"SARAH BUNBURY.

"*Arras, February 4, 1767.*"

"You have wholly changed my heart, my friend; it is sad and broken; and, although you hurt me so, I can have no other thoughts than my love. I had no idea that such a thing could happen, and I thought that I was proud enough and good enough not to have my happiness depend on a French lover. The wind is contrary, and I am not sorry: it is better to be in the same country. I weep much. I told Sir Charles that I had a headache, and he accepted the explanation. Lord Carlisle did not believe it, for he looked at me very seriously. . . . Oh! *mon Dieu!* what I am doing must be very bad since I strive to conceal

it, and that I, the most truthful of women, find myself obliged to lie and deceive two persons whom I so much esteem. They went out, and I remained behind to write to the one who is even dearer to me than the rest which I have lost for him. I dare not send my letter to the post by a servant; I am having it done by one of the inn boys: he seems gentle and kind; he promises to be exact, and not to mention the matter to anyone; I should be utterly ruined if he betrayed me. Everything bores me, importunes me, and it will thus continue until I see you. Come as soon as you can do so without imprudence; for I forbid you anything you might regret. Obtain a leave of absence; M. le prince de Conti is extremely good to you and will assist you. Come and with your presence crown the greatest happiness your mistress may expect. I do not fear that you will not comprehend my ridiculous French; your heart and mine will always understand one another. Good-bye, for I fear to be surprised. Think that for you alone exists your Sarah.

"Calais, February 6, 1767."

I returned to Paris on horseback, and in the most awful state. A malignant fever could not have caused a greater change in me. M. le prince de Conti was flattered at Lady Sarah's confidence, and responded so readily, that within two weeks I had leave to go to England. There I was received in a manner to increase my love, if such a thing were possible.

After the ceremonies of presentation and visits which the pedantry of M. le comte de Guerchi, at that time ambassador of France, made almost everlasting, I finally left for the country with Sir Charles and Lady Sarah.

The time I spent at Barton was certainly the happiest of my life. At the end of a few days Sir Charles was obliged to absent himself for three weeks, which I spent in *tête-à-tête* with his wife. She showed me the tenderest love but would grant me nothing. Finally, one evening she told me that I might come down to her room when everyone had retired. I awaited the long-hoped for moment with extreme impatience. I found her in bed and thought I could take some liberties; she appeared so offended and grieved at

my conduct that I did not persist. She however permitted me to lie near her; but she exacted a moderation and reserve which was almost beyond me. This charming torture lasted several nights. I had lost the hope of its ever ending, when, passionately pressing me in her arms, she crowned all my desires.

"I did not wish," said she to me, "that my lover should have anything by force, nor that he should owe it to my weakness or to his lack of respect towards me. I wished him to owe everything to my love. I give myself to you; yes, Sarah is wholly yours."

We went out riding together the next day.

"Do you love me more than all else," she said to me, "and do you feel capable to sacrifice everything?"

"I assuredly do," I replied without hesitation, and with the certainty of never repenting it.

"Well!" she continued, looking at me with her eyes that have no equal, "do you wish to give up everything, leave everything, to come to Jamaica, to devote yourself solely to the happiness of your mistress? I have a rich childless relative there,

who has love, indulgence, and of whom I am sure; he will receive us gladly." And as I was about to reply: "Wait," she interrupted, "I do not wish to know your answer before a week."

What Lady Sarah proposed to me was in truth what could render me most happy. I regretted none of the sacrifices which would probably have cost another so much; but I could not conceal that she was frivolous, a coquette. It seemed to me impossible that she should not cease to love me, that she should not some day repent so rash a decision. Lady Sarah, unhappy, dissatisfied, without occupation, without subsistence, at the other end of the world, might reproach me for being the cause of her ruin; it would have been a Hades, and such a prospect frightened me.

The week passed. I confided my fears to her.

"It is well, my friend," said she to me, somewhat coldly; "you are more prudent, more provident than I; you are perhaps right, let us drop the subject."

Her manners towards me were the same. I however thought I saw in her something constrained, which gave me anxiety. Her husband

came back and we returned to the city. The doctors ordered Sir Charles, whose health was rather delicate, to go to Bath to take the waters; he went and left his wife in London. I thought it courteous to go and spend two or three days with him: I mentioned the matter to Lady Sarah, who approved of it, and who seemed to be grateful to me for it. I left on the Monday, wishing to be back in London on the morning of the following Friday. She herself promised to wait for me, to have her door closed, and to spend the entire day with me. I returned to London, with all the eagerness of a man much in love; I was dismayed not to find Lady Sarah there, and to learn that she had left with Lord Carlisle, to go to Goodwood, to the home of the Duke of Richmond, her brother.

All that fury and jealousy could inspire took possession of my heart. I wrote a letter to Lady Sarah, dictated by anger and hastiness; I sent it to her at Goodwood by one of my men. I told her in my letter that if she did not return to London at once, I should consider her as the most wicked, the most false and most perfidious of

women. I awaited the return of my messenger with inexpressible impatience. He returned at last, and brought me back a gentle and even rather tender reply; some reproaches regarding the way in which I embittered all the charms of love by my violence. She promised me to be in London in two days. I waited for her at her home until midnight. During the time she had set, every coach that entered Whitehall seemed to me must be bringing her, and I saw my hopes rise and fall every instant during that day, perhaps the longest in my life. I returned to my rooms, and my whole night was spent in walking and in the most painful thought.

At six o'clock in the morning, someone knocked at my door; I was the first to open it. Lady Sarah had just arrived and asked for me. I ran or rather flew to her. I thought her face was serious and composed: a table with all things necessary for a breakfast was before her, and several servants were in the room. More than an hour passed before we were alone.

"Now," she said to me, "that I need fear no interruption, I must speak of matters which interest

us equally. You know what charming qualities in you have won my heart. Even the excess of your jealousy did not displease me; that of your love being so great a compensation! Your anger, when you thought me a coquette, I bore with submission, without ill-humour, and I have never found it hard to ask your pardon when you were not always in the right. I wished to give you Lady Sarah wholly and for ever, her very existence, her reputation, the most absolute power over her. You have not had sufficient confidence either in your constancy, or in mine. You have not found me necessary to your happiness, and you did not care to have with me bonds that nothing could have broken. In crushing my heart, you have weakened your image in it; you have continued to be jealous and violent, after having lost the right to be: I now feel all the dangers of this. Nothing can make me forget them. If my brother had asked to see your letter, how could I have refused him? And if the Duke of Richmond had read it, I was lost; and sacrificed for whom? . . . You yourself have destroyed the sentiment which attached me to you; I no longer love

you; but it was too tender for the impression, now painful, not to last. From now until a time perhaps far off, we could not meet with indifference; I therefore make bold to ask you as a favour to leave England, and henceforth to count only on the tender friendship which I have vowed to you for life."

Struck as if by lightning by a blow so fearful and unexpected, I lost consciousness. Lady Sarah, moved by my condition, seated on the floor near me, gave me aid and bathed my face with her tears. Mme. Joanes, sister of Sir Charles Bunbury, entered, and astonished at the sight, fell back.

"Come, madame Joanes," she said to her, "take care of this unfortunate: he is my lover, and I leave him to you." So saying she left her room, entered her chaise and started to join her husband at Bath. I recovered my senses, and returned to my rooms seemingly quite calm. I mounted a horse and attempted to follow Lady Sarah. I had so many things to tell her, that it seemed she would not be lost to me if I could speak to her but once again. After a few miles

I again fainted and spat much blood. I felt so weak that it was impossible for me to go farther.

I had much trouble in reaching London once more, where I was dangerously ill for several days, and where I received the most generous care from Mme. Joanes.

Lady Sarah wrote earnestly asking me not to go away without coming to Bath to say good-bye to her. I could not resist the pleasure or rather the necessity of seeing her, and to have a last explanation. She received me with interest, with friendship; but she was so changed towards me, that, far from thinking of prolonging my sojourn, I thought of hastening my departure. I returned to France very different from what I was on leaving for England; nothing could divert me from a sentiment which made me so unhappy. Yet Lady Sarah wrote me regularly. I did not think that she had a lover; but I had been loved by her, and she no longer loved me. My unsociableness was so great that nothing could diminish it. I learned that Lady Sarah was ill in London; nothing could stop me. I left immediately without leave of

absence, without passport. She accepted this token of affection with pleasure and gratitude.

"Leave, my friend," said she, "within twenty-four hours, remember that Lady Sarah is nothing more than your friend. Do not incur the risks for her which a longer absence might entail."

On my return I heard from her more rarely; and finally not at all. I sought all means of forgetting her, but without success. I tried to live the sort of life I had led before knowing her. I could no more become attached to any woman; comparisons were too much to their disadvantage; my character was entirely changed. I had lost my gaiety, all the qualities that made me sought after. I was indifferent to the pleasures which formerly had the greatest charm for me. Yet I sought every opportunity to divert my mind from so deep a grief, but almost always without success. I made the acquaintance of a very pretty girl, at the Opera ball. She has made too much of a sensation not to mention her; her name was Mlle. Vaubernier: she was called *the angel,* because of her celestial face; she was living with M. le comte du Barry, who supported himself by intrigues and all sorts

of trades. I was invited to supper at the house, which looked quite fine, and where there were some very pretty persons; but it is impossible to find a more ludicrous figure than that of the master. M. du Barry was in a superb *robe de chambre,* his hat on his head, containing two baked apples which he had been ordered to put over his eyes.

M. le duc de Choiseul, at this time, resolved upon the conquest of Corsica,[14] and he sent over M. le marquis de Chauvelin with sixteen battalions. The prospect of battle was too precious to be neglected. I was not on sufficiently good terms with all my relatives for them to fear that I should be killed. I was therefore detailed as aide-de-camp to M. de Chauvelin.

CHAPTER III

CHAPTER III

(1768–1772)

I LEFT for Corsica in the month of June, 1768. I found M. Chardon [15] at Toulon; he was commissary of Corsica, and was taking with him his wife, aged eighteen and pretty; she appeared to me to be a gift from Heaven, and I began, without affectation, to pay her attentions which were not over well received.

I had orders not to go to Corsica without M. de Chauvelin, whom I had left in Paris. I learned that fighting was going on, and I embarked on the King's xebec *Le Singe,* to go to Saint-Florent. M. de Bomluer, commander of the King's navy, sent me orders to disembark. I returned to land. I took only Mme. Chardon into my confidence, and I started that night on a fishing boat. M. de Chauvelin arrived three weeks after me and placed me under arrest for a few days.

I waged war with the ardour and activity of a man who desires to give proof of his capacity. My affairs with Mme. Chardon were not progressing; she was polite, but nothing else but polite. I only lacked a mistress to be perfectly happy, and I did not become discouraged. M. de Chauvelin's first successes were not of long duration: the infantry of the royal legion, the company of grenadiers of Languedoc, etc., . . . were shut in Borgho, badly fortified, and attacked for thirty-five days by the most formidable that Corsica possessed, when M. de Chauvelin resolved to go to the assistance of Borgho, and with such arrangements, that it was impossible to doubt of the disaster of that day; therefore never did I see such consternation as that which prevailed in Bastia. The danger in which each thought himself when we left the town, caused every other consideration to be forgotten. Mme. Chardon gave me a white feather which I placed in my hat, and which certainly brought me luck, since it did not cause me to be killed; it made me so conspicuous that every shot was preferably sent towards me. Everyone knows what happened in the Borgho engagement and

how disastrous it was to our small army. The battle was lost; M. de Chauvelin, closely pressed, had been obliged to retreat with such haste, that the bullets reached his field-hospital.

It was seen, with despair, that M. de Marbœuf had been abandoned, with a third of his troops, on the other side of the Golo, and that all communications between them had been cut. There remained, along the sea, a passage that could be pointed out to M. le comte de Marbœuf, and have him supported by a few companies of grenadiers; but he had to be found, and this dangerous mission required a knowledge of the country which was possessed by no one but me, for I had already visited Corsica with M. de Marbœuf. I offered my services and left with my hussars. When I had gone about five hundred feet, a few shots were fired at me from the brush, but these did not stop me and I passed on at a gallop; but I was soon halted by a considerable volley of gunshots, which appeared to me must come from one of the principal bodies of the Corsican army. I retreated, wishing to reach the coast.

The Soissonnais regiment, which escorted M.

de Chauvelin, had formed in battle array and had marched forward at the first shots heard, and responded to the last by a lively and continued fire from the two battalions; I passed along the sea among the rocks, and joined M. de Marbœuf, who was being closely pursued by the Corsicans, and who was wounded, as were also M.M. d'Arcambale and Campême, while I was speaking to him. I pointed out the surest road to find M. de Chauvelin, whom he joined without accident. M. de Chauvelin told me that his misfortunes did not prevent him from fully appreciating the service I had rendered; that he would ask for the cross of Saint Louis for me, and that he thought that he could promise it to me before the whole army. He has never spoken of the matter to anyone since then.

I found at General Headquarters a short note from Mme. Chardon, who, already informed of our defeat, requested me to be careful of a life in which she was interested, and promised to make me happy. The army was slowly returning to Bastia; I preceded it through paths known to me, and I reached the city two hours before the others.

Mme. Chardon kept her word, and surrendered to me with a tenderness and sincerity which have always made me retain much friendship for her. Her husband, who was beginning to be jealous of me, returned; he thought that I was coming on behind, and wanted to take advantage of the opportunity by laying a trap for his wife and discover her sentiments; he told her on entering that all was lost; that the army had been almost destroyed, many persons of her acquaintance killed, and mentioned me as among the dead.

"I must then have brought him back to life," she said, laughing, "for he is in the next room, very tired, it is true, but I assure you that he is not dead."

Several other checks followed the unfortunate Borgho's engagement. Fighting was going on at the very gates of Bastia; this was the sort of life that suited me best; throughout the day, under fire, and in the evening supper with my mistress. M. de Chardon's jealousy disturbed my happiness to some extent: his wife was often ill treated and to be pitied; but who is not aware that moments of love compensate for centuries of sorrow?

M. de Chauvelin went away, M. le comte de Marbœuf took a liking to and acquired confidence in me. We were in the month of January: all was quiet. I asked his permission to go and spend two days in the camp of Corsica; he granted it to me. He learned during my absence that Clemente Pasli had formed the project of passing between his redoubts, to penetrate into Cape Corso and to attack him on all sides at the same time. The moment when M. de Marbœuf received this piece of news was almost that of its execution. It was important to occupy Montebello in front of Bastia; he wanted to send me with a few companies of grenadiers; but I was not there, and it was necessary that they should leave that same evening. He asked Mme. Chardon several times if I should not return that day. She perceived that there was something new, pressed him vigorously, and discovered his secret. She threw herself, weeping, in the arms of M. de Marbœuf, who loved her tenderly.

"You know M. de Lauzun," she said to him; "he would be less dear to me, if he were apt to forgive me for allowing him to lose, through my

negligence, an occasion to distinguish himself, however dangerous it might be. I am going to send him a messenger without going into particulars, and I give you my word that he will be here before the departure of the detachment."

I reached her house without suspecting anything.

"Do not lose a moment," she said to me, "go to M. de Marbœuf, he has something to say to you. He will prove to you that I love your fame as much as I do your person."

I was fortunate enough to take possession of Montebello ahead of the Corsicans. I should have spent a very cold night there, had it not been made warm by frequent attacks. At break of day I perceived M. de Marbœuf in the plain. With fixed bayonets we passed through the Corsicans who surrounded us, and joined him. They retreated to the village of Barbaggio, which we cannonaded all day long without success.

The next day, people came from Bastia, as to a show, to see our siege. The position itself made it safe for those who wished to be but spectators. Mme. Chardon came there on horseback, and stood near M. de Marbœuf. Her husband returned to

town to order a second field-hospital, the number of our wounded being considerable. A rather large body of the enemy succeeded in reaching a small plain, from where they kept up a murderous fire against our battery, and killed many gunners. M. de Marbœuf ordered me to charge them with some dragoons of the Soubise legion. I left at once. Mme. Chardon wished to follow me; I tried to prevent her and later to have her stopped to send her back to M. de Marbœuf; but she rode very rapidly; she passed before me at full speed.

" Are you one of those who believe that a woman should risk her life only in childbirth; and can she not be permitted to once follow her lover? " she said.

She went through many shots with the greatest calmness, giving all that she had in her pockets to the soldiers and to the dragoons, and only returned to me after the affair was ended. The whole army kept the secret of this charming recklessness with a fidelity which one could not have expected of three or four persons.

Everyone knows the outcome of the Barbaggio affair, and that the modesty of M. de Marbœuf,

who would not transmit the news by an officer, cost him the command of the army: the mail boat having stopped in Italy, instead of going on, the news only reached its destination after the appointment of M. le comte de Vaux.

To quiet the jealousy of M. Chardon, I went to spend six weeks at Roscane; I then returned to Corsica, where I learned of the marriage and presentation of Mme. la comtesse du Barry. I went through the campaign with M. le comte de Vaux, as first assistant-major of his army. Nothing remarkable happened to me during this campaign; he sent me away on the 24th of June to carry to the Court the news of the total submission of the island and of the departure of M. de Paoli. I did not leave Corsica without regret, for I spent there what was perhaps the happiest year of my life. I hurried day and night, and I arrived, half dead with fatigue, at Saint Hubert, June 29, 1769, at five o'clock in the evening.

The King was at the Council; I asked for M. le duc de Choiseul, and handed him my dispatches. The King bade me enter, received me most kindly, and commanded me to remain at Saint Hubert,

just as I was, in jacket and boots. The curiosity of again seeing *the angel* in so different a position caused me to remain with pleasure: I went to the salon to await the end of the Council meeting; she was not long in coming, embraced me with good grace, and said to me, laughing:

"Would we ever have dreamed to meet again here?"

The King, seeing that she appeared quite familiar with me, asked her if she knew me.

"He has long been a friend of mine," she replied without embarrassment.

M. le duc de Choiseul tried to become reconciled with me, and approached with such good grace, that I was much impressed and vowed him an attachment of which I have often since given him evidence, and which would never have changed, had he so wished. I was given the cross of Saint Louis as a reward of my news: which flattering favour, at my age, wronged no one, and gave me much pleasure.

I followed the King to Compiègne, and I continued to be well treated by him, as also by Mme. du Barry. The King suggested to M. le maréchal

de Biron that he give me the reversion of the regiment of the Gardes-Françaises; whether he considered that the King had been advised by M. le duc de Choiseul, or whether he had the ordinary dislike old people have for their reversioners, he raised my youth as an objection and refused to comply. M. le duc de Choiseul wished to give me the Corsican legion which he was then raising, a thing which tempted me very much; it was a regiment of four battalions. I refused, and remained in the regiment of the guards out of deference to my father.

During the voyage to Compiègne, M. du Barry made an appointment with me in the forest, and I went there the next morning. He complained to me of the bitterness which M. le duc de Choiseul had against Mme. du Barry and against himself; told me that she appreciated so able a minister, and that she earnestly desired to live on good terms with him, and that he had better not force her to become his enemy; that she had over the King more influence than Mme. de Pompadour ever had, and that she would be very sorry if he compelled her to use it to his detriment. He

requested me to report this conversation to M. le duc de Choiseul, and to convey to him all sorts of protestations of attachment. I performed my commission. M. le duc de Choiseul received it with the haughtiness of a minister persecuted by women, and who feels that he has nothing to fear. An implacable war was therefore declared between him and the King's mistress; and Mme. le duchesse de Grammont, in her insulting talks, did not spare the King himself.

During the year 1769, a very pretty dancer of the Opera, named Mlle. Audinot,[16] reproached me for not recognising her; in truth I recalled that I had acted in comedy with her at Ile-Adam,[17] when she was but a mere child. It was difficult to find a more attractive face. We took a liking to one another; but for some time this did not do us much good. She was kept in magnificent style by M. le maréchal de Soubise, carefully watched by her mother and by several other persons. She dwelt on a second story, in the rue de Richelieu, in a rather old house, which shook at the passing of every coach. An idea occurred to me which succeeded perfectly; I bribed a servant who had

a key made for me, and I sought an English carriage which made much noise; I caused it to pass in front of the house, and, with its aid, I entered and left without the mother, who slept in the next room, noticing it. This continued for almost the entire winter. It was finally discovered, but what could not be prevented had to be permitted. The young girl loved me very much, she wanted to leave M. de Soubise, I prevented her from doing so; he heard of it, and was grateful to me, and thought it best that she continue her relations with me.

The violence of M. de Choiseul and of his women against Mme. du Barry was stronger than ever, and the impropriety of their speeches against a prince to whom they owed everything, infinitely decreased the merit of a noble and generous conduct. My father was on the same terms with Mme. du Barry as he had been with all the other King's mistresses, a little less intimate, however, because of M. de Choiseul. I rarely called on her and was not in favour for having declared that I should never permit Mme. de Lauzun to call. I was well aware that a proposition had

been made to Mme. de Luxembourg to go on the short trips, and that she had almost decided to do so. My firmness stopped her, and she dared not accept. M. le duc d'Aiguillon and M. le maréchal de Richelieu plotted powerfully against M. le duc de Choiseul. M. le prince de Condé joined them; they finally won, and M. le duc de Choiseul was exiled to Chanteloup,[18] on the 24th of December, 1770. Never will favour render a minister more celebrated than did this disgrace. Consternation was general, and in all states there was no one who did not seek to give to M. de Choiseul some mark of attachment and veneration.

I did not hesitate to devote myself to his fortune. I took a great deal of money and letters of credit on different places in Europe, and I prepared to accompany him. Everyone was convinced that his head was in danger, and that he would soon be obliged to leave the Kingdom so as not to be arrested. I experienced, before going away, two very generous acts at the hands of two persons of very different stations in life. Mlle. Audinot sent me 4,000 *louis* which repre-

sented her entire fortune, and was in a veritable despair at my refusing them.

I remained three weeks at Chanteloup, and I then returned to duty at Versailles. At a few leagues from Paris I found a letter and horses from M. de Guéménée. He advised me that at the Council it had been proposed that I be sent to the Bastille, and that M. le maréchal de Soubise was the only one to oppose the motion; that Mme. du Barry insisted strongly on my being taught a lesson for having gone to Chanteloup without permission and for having carried letters to M. de Choiseul. I well knew that they would not dare arrest me in Paris; but I feared the gates. I approached that of Varennes, fully determined, if I should see the slightest move, to rush past the Invalides at full speed and to swim across the river. I passed without accident, and I reached my little house, rue Saint Pierre, where I found all the friends of M. le duc de Choiseul awaiting me.

In the evening I went to Versailles to Mme. la Dauphine's ball, and created a sensation. All surrounded me to have news from Chanteloup,

and everybody seemed to be grateful to me for my courage. I never played so fine a part in my life. Mme. la Dauphine came towards me with that charm of manner already inseparable from her every action, and said to me:

"How is M. de Choiseul? When you see him again, tell him that I shall never forget what I owe him, and that I shall always take the most sincere interest in him."

I returned to Chanteloup after my watch,[19] and I spent there all the time I was not on duty. I was then in open disgrace. The King no longer spoke to me.

More than ever on friendly terms with M. le prince de Guéménée, we were often together. He took me to Mme. de Roth, and I again found that charming person whom I had taken for Mlle. de Boufflers a few years before. She was then Mme. la comtesse Dillon. Few women have combined so many amiable qualities: gentle, noble, generous, a good friend after ten years. I take pleasure in admitting that with the desire, the means and the certainty to please, Mme. Dillon could not be accused of a shadow of coquetry.

A liking for hunting and the country rendered my intimacy closer, and I became as frequent a caller at her house as M. de Guéménée. It was not long before I noticed how dear Mme. Dillon was to him; and how delicate and discreet was his manner of loving. I myself did not escape so dangerous a trap. I saw with grief that I was in love with Mme. Dillon; but, good gracious! how little did this love resemble the others. I hoped nothing from it; I did not see in the future: I did not even dare wish the possibility of being successful. I however reproached myself as of a treason such a feeling towards a woman to whom I had no doubt M. de Guéménée was for ever devoted. I gave the strongest weapons against me, under the pretext of confidence: I concealed from Mme. Dillon none of the things made to cause a woman to shun me. I showed her my character much more fickle than it was in fact; I told her of my love of freedom; I confessed that I was naturally inconstant.

I was determined to travel for some time, but Mme. Dillon fell ill and I delayed my departure. She recovered and I set the date of my leaving

for December 15, 1772. The day came, Mme. Dillon embraced me and we separated with tears in our eyes. Mme. de Roth until then had appeared neither to take sides nor to advise her daughter; but I thought that she fancied me more.

My departure for England was a complete renunciation of my claims: or rather a formal confession that I had none and that I could not honestly have any.

CHAPTER IV

CHAPTER IV

(1772–1774)

I REACHED London on the 22d of December, 1772, and that very evening M. le comte de Guines, ambassador of France, took me to a party at Lady Harrington's. I found many former acquaintances there. A woman better dressed and with her hair better arranged than is customary with English women, entered the room. I asked who she was; I was told that she was Polish, and that she was Mme. la princesse Czartoryska.[20] Rather small, but perfectly formed, the most beautiful eyes, the most beautiful hair, the finest of teeth, a very pretty foot; much pock-marked and lacking freshness, gentle in her manners, and in her slightest motions of inimitable grace, Mme. Czartoryska proved that without being pretty one could be charming. I learned that she had for a lover a Russian named prince Rapnine, a man

of merit and distinction, formerly ambassador at Warsaw, who worshipped her, and who had left everything to follow her and devote himself solely to her. Mme. Czartoryska appeared to me gay, coquettish and amiable, but he who would then have told me that she would have a great influence on the rest of my life would have astonished me very much. Sadly preoccupied by all that I regretted in France, I asked for nothing better than diversion.

M. le comte de Guines [21] had at that time as publicly as it was possible, a very pretty mistress whom his fatuity and the misfortunes she nearly caused have rendered famous in England. A woman of simple manners, tender, it was impossible to see Lady Craven without becoming interested in her.

I could not resist the pleasure of again seeing Lady Sarah. I learned that she dwelt on a small farm called Anecker in the Duke of Richmond's park at Goodwood; that she lived in the greatest solitude and saw no one. I left London alone on horseback, and I arrived with much trouble at nine o'clock at night, in winter, at the door of

Anecker. I knocked several times and no one responded; at last, a young girl came to ask me what I wished; I replied that I was one of Lady Holland's servants and that I had a letter for Lady Sarah.

" Come in," said she to me.

I went up without light. I crossed a large and very dark room, and went towards the door of another, where I thought I saw a light. I opened it; Lady Sarah had her back to it; she was busy making a very pretty little girl whom I frightened, eat. Lady Sarah saw me, took the child in her arms, came to meet me.

" Kiss my daughter, Lauzun, do not hate her, forgive her mother, and consider that if she should lose her, she would have left no other protector but you."

Lady Sarah, retired from society, dressed in a simple blue dress, her hair cut short and powderless, was more beautiful, more attractive than she had ever been. After six years, we had been unable to meet again without great emotion. I promised to take charge of her daughter whenever she wished it. I did not reproach her, she

thanked me, and we separated, after having talked together for two hours.

I returned to London, where having met Lady Harland I saw her two daughters; I was first most interested in the elder, without there being anything between us however. One evening at Lady Craven's, Miss Marianne Harland (the younger daughter) reproached me for seeming ill-humoured and bored: "You are not seeking to please anyone, is there no one in this room to your liking?" she added, with infinite expression. I understood what she meant perfectly well; but the conversation was interrupted. Miss Marianne Harland was not yet sixteen; she was small, dainty, she had fine hair, beautiful eyes, charming teeth, a voice like Gabrielli's, and which she used as well. Great coquetry, always subordinate to ambition; such is, I believe, the exact description of the face and character of Miss Marianne Harland.

I approached her after the supper, and whispered to her: "Should I give you a little note to-morrow, will you lose it?" "No, but don't be imprudent." I went to lunch at Lady Harland's the next day. I gave a note to Marianne; she

took it very cleverly and disappeared a moment after. When I left, Miss Harland called me on the stairs, and said to me, blushing: "Marianne has requested me to give you this; am I not good!" This note contained the strongest recommendations of discretion and fidelity. I spent all my time at Lady Harland's; I was looked upon as one of the family. Marianne's conceit was much flattered at having a French admirer; she had besides at that time much liking for me; I, on my side, loved her tenderly. We wrote to each other frequently, and handed letters to one another in the presence of good Lady Harland, who suspected nothing. I could, however, not conceal from myself that this intrigue could not last, and that it might have the most grievous and embarrassing outcome.

M. de Pezai often called at the house: he thought the two Miss Harlands immensely wealthy; he spoke of marriage to the elder, and was refused; he turned to the younger, and was received no better. Astounded at this he guessed that Marianne had a liking for someone, and, soon after, that I was the person. He spoke of the matter to Lady Harland, and left for France. A

lackey gave to Marianne assurances of discretion and faithfulness which beguiled her; she had the imprudence to intrust him with her letters.

Lady Harland formed the project of taking her elder daughter, whose health was very bad, to the waters at Bristol. She suggested that I go and spend two weeks with them. I accepted with delight: I left a few days after them. I went and spent a week at Lord Pembroke's, and from there went to Bath. I found the chevalier d'Oraison there, who was returning from Bristol and who informed me that everything was discovered and that Lady Harland was terribly angry with me.

I came to a decision without hesitation: I went to Bristol. I asked for a quarter of an hour's interview with Lady Harland. After having well scolded me, she forgave me, on the condition that I should promptly leave England. But to this she would not add the grief of my leaving without bidding farewell to Marianne; and the funny part of this was that this terrible mother finally tolerated in her presence the assurance of the tenderest love.

Miss Harland recovered her health. The fam-

ily left Bristol and returned to a handsome estate near Ipswich. Marianne soon received the attentions of the richest and most disagreeable baronet of the county of Suffolk: in spite of all his sullenness, she would have married him had she not discovered that he intended to live in the country and not take his wife to London.

This proposed marriage having fallen through, Lady Harland returned to London. I again found means of becoming reconciled with her and of being received at her house. We put more circumspection in our conduct, and the poor little woman was no more difficult to deceive. All went well for a few weeks. A letter which Marianne carelessly lost again revealed affairs: the mother left London at once with her daughters, without telling them where she was going. Marianne later wrote me a letter in which she stated that she still loved me, but giving me the plainest and most absolute *congé*. I was sorry; but I knew that this intrigue could have no other than a bad end, and I felt that it was very fortunate that it had no more grievous one.

I remained in London without occupation, but

the publicity of the love affairs of the ambassador of France and Lady Craven soon gave me a serious one. The fatuity of M. le comte de Guines, and the imprudence of the young woman, necessarily brought on a scandal. M. de Guines wished to induce Lady Craven to secure a separation from her husband and bind herself to his chariot. He advised her with such extravagance, that he came near being brought to justice by Lord Craven, and condemned to pay him 10,000 pounds sterling, a most disagreeable affair and the most unpleasant an ambassador could have; this together with the terrible suit which he was having with Tort, his secretary, would have undone him utterly. I served him with zeal, and with success; but all depended on the answers of Lady Craven, who had been taken away and locked up in a country house by her husband, so that she should have no communication with anyone.

Mme. la princesse de Czartóryska had the courage to go and force her privacy and dictate her conduct to her, the only way of saving her and her lover. This incident enlightened me as to the feeling and generosity of Mme. Czartoryska.

Chance made her discover all the details of my affair with Lady Sarah, and how capable I was of delicacy for one whom I had loved. As the time of departure of Mme. Czartoryska approached, I was made aware of the tenderness and generosity of her heart; I became attached to her almost imperceptibly.

A few days before her departure for Spa, the ambassador gave her a dinner at Vauxhall, with several women of her acquaintance. She told me that she would send away her children and servants before her, and that she would join them at Calais, but that she was a bit afraid to undertake that trip alone; I offered to accompany her with eagerness. She thanked me, saying that she was delighted at the offer; but that she feared that it would not be considered proper. All the women assured her that there was nothing objectionable in the act; the ambassador seemed to be a little angry at it.

I went to the princess' the following morning. I spoke of our voyage. She told me that she was extremely grateful for my politeness, but that she had changed her mind owing to the gossip which might result. I pleaded my cause with so much

warmth, that I persuaded her; she promised that we should leave together and appeared to appreciate the interest I showed in following her. M. de Guines saw her during the day, and again frightened her about my attentions. I arrived as he went out, and easily guessed what was taking place within her.

"I no longer insist," I said to her, "persecutions are stronger than your courage. I shall for ever regret an occasion which I shall not again find, to make clear to you many strange events and to prove that my conduct is less inconsistent than you may think."

I saw in her eyes curiosity, interest, a sort of compassion.

"Fear no more," she said to me, "you seem to have too much pleasure in coming with me, and I should lose too much in preventing you to do so; there will be no other change in my plans."

She held out her hand, I kissed it; and, from that moment, if she so willed, she could no longer doubt that she was adored. Our departure was set for the next day at noon.

I reached the princess' promptly.

" My affairs," she said, " will not be settled before five o'clock, come with me and say goodbye to Mme. Ponskin, who leaves for Bristol."

She left the princess with regret and wept very much, as did also the baronne Dierden and Miss Johnson.

" I should be much more unhappy than all those women," I said in a whisper to Mme. Czartoryska, " should I not go away with you."

A charming glance was her sole reply. I returned to her house at five o'clock, I was told that she was unwell and was asleep. This sleep seemed suspicious to me. I stopped at a small tavern at the corner of Berkley Square, and wrote asking her to reassure me; she replied that she would not leave before the next morning, that she would advise me of the hour.

I cannot express the many different ideas that went through my head. I saw with grief that M. de Guines, still weeping for his loss of Lady Craven, aspired to sacrifice to his vanity the woman to whom he owed everything and the man who had best served him. From that time I saw clearly that gratitude was less sacred than his con-

ceit, and that he could be an ingrate. I loved the princess earnestly; and the fear of compromising her rendered me patient and reasonable. I returned to the ambassador's, where I was to have supper with Lord Sandwich.

I could no longer keep my secret. I wrote to the princess that I did not doubt that M. de Guines had again disturbed her projects, that I was deeply grieved at this; that I could understand by my own experience that he felt how impossible it was to see her, and specially to know her without adoring her; that I was far from wishing to speak ill of M. de Guines, but that no happiness could exist for me without my devoting my whole life to her, and that I was the most independent being in the world. I shall here transcribe the reply from the princess; the first note shows her character as well as a longer letter would.

"Nothing on earth could have astonished me more than what I have just read; but what does not astonish me, and what will never astonish me, is the frankness and delicacy of your mind. There exist between us insurmountable obstacles,

with which, I swear to you, that M. de Guines has nothing to do. I must not, I cannot have a lover; but you inspire me with an interest that will last as long as my life, no matter where we may dwell; whatever your lot may be, I request that you inform me of it; my tender friendship gives me the right to do this. We can not go to Dover together, but come and see me before my departure."

The ambassador proposed that we both accompany the princess as far as Dover; I refused in the calmest and most indifferent manner possible. My night was passed in transports of fury and despair, that I myself could not understand; I feared myself, I should not have answered for my actions had I met M. de Guines at Mme. Czartoryska's. I therefore resolved to be on guard against myself. I locked myself in my apartment, and ordered one of my servants to go to her house, and to bring me word as soon as she had left; I counted upon joining her on the road, stop her and have with her that explanation so important to both of us.

I remained in this condition until five o'clock;

M. de Guines knocked at my door himself and asked me if I wished to dine. I opened; he told me that the princess sent me her compliments, that she had gone away at noon, much astonished not to have seen me: had a thunderbolt fallen on my head I should have been less overwhelmed. I told M. de Guines (by whom the servant who was to inform me of her departure had no doubt been bribed) that I could not dine with him. I rushed to the stable, I myself saddled the first horse I found, and I was on the Dover road as soon as I could. My horse, too young and scant of breath, failed me at Sittingborn. I learned that the princess was but ten miles ahead of me, and that she had joined her children and servants. I wrote her a letter whose confusion well described my love and despair. I returned to London hurriedly. I reached there early enough to go to a club and play sufficiently high to be noticed and to lead people to believe that I had not left the city. The next day I received a sad and touching reply from Mme. Czartoryska; she assured me of her tenderest interest, and seemed affected by the bonds which attached me to her.

CHAPTER V

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(1774 — March, 1775)

At the end of a few days, I received a letter from the chevalier d'Oraison; he had seen the princess on her passage through Brussels; she was ill, devoured by some secret sorrow; I remained more than another month in England. I went to Portsmouth with the King. Finally I thought that I might leave for Spa without impropriety. The ambassador and I parted rather coldly: I had penetrated him; I was now no more than a hindrance to him.

At last I reached Spa. The princess received me coldly, and appeared to be more than ever attached to prince Repnine. M. de Guines had neglected nothing, since she had left London, to persuade me that she loved him; that she had given him her portrait, and all the other proofs that a woman can give. I therefore resolved to break

with her at whatever cost, and to treat her with much indifference. I was on excellent terms with prince Repnine, who did not suspect that I was in love.

The dances and the receptions caused me to make the acquaintance of Mme. and Mlle. de Saint-Léger,[22] both Irish. Mme. de Saint-Léger was between forty and forty-five years of age; she had been pretty, and, under cover of a reserved demeanour, still retained a taste for pleasure. Her daughter aged eighteen, was amiable and pretty. I danced and rode with her; both took a liking to me. The mother, although jealous of her daughter and become more strict towards her, rendered herself justice, and felt that she would lose me absolutely should she prevent me from seeing her daughter; I therefore became very assiduous at their house. The princess jested about the matter.

" It is your fault," I said to her, laughing, " and with a word you could prevent it."

My attentions to Mlle. de Saint-Léger soon became public. A quarrel which I had with M. Braniski, however, showed to the princess that I

was far from having ceased to be interested in her.

M. Braniski, for a long time in love with the princess, and always badly received, spoke of her in a manner I could not bear and I told him so. This quarrel would have gone much farther had it not been for Lady Spencer. The princess learned with what warmth I had defended her, and was grateful to me. There was a horse race in which one of my horses won; I presented the prize to Mlle. de Saint-Léger. At the same moment, Mme. la princesse de Czartoryska fainted and returned home. I was far from suspecting the cause, and I barely noticed the incident. A long and serious illness followed this fainting spell. I did not leave her, and I gave her all the care which my heart dictated. I remained away as her health improved and when I considered my care less necessary.

Everybody was leaving Spa, and I was arranging to leave with Mme. and Mlle. de Saint-Léger, when prince Repnine, who had no reason to be suspicious of me, told me that he was obliged to remain about two weeks more, and to bring back

Mme. Tschermischeff, that I should certainly please the princess if I proposed to return to Paris with her. I did not have to be coaxed: the princess was much more dear to me than he thought. We departed therefore, and prince Repnine accompanied us a few posts. We travelled by short stages, and I rode my own horses. Mme. Czartoryska was still quite weak, and felt very tired on reaching Brussels; she ate no supper and went to bed. I remained to keep her company. We spoke of England, and the conversation soon turned to comte de Guines and Lady Craven. I told her with details all that her departure had made me suffer; her eyes filled with tears.

"Let us end this," she said, "and let us never again take up the subject."

It was too late; our destinies had to be fulfilled. The princess loved me and told me so. So much happiness was disturbed by the fear which my sentiment caused her, and by the horrible outcome which it could not fail to have. We separated and spent a most restless night.

The following day the prince proposed that we all go to Antwerp to see a collection of paintings

which he wished to buy. It was arranged, without her being able to object, that she would drive there with me in a small phaeton which I had brought from England, with horses she had often driven herself at Spa. We were no sooner at liberty than the following conversation began:

"It would be useless, monsieur de Lauzun, to seek to conceal how much I love you; but I owe to this very sentiment, which is dearer to me than life itself, to place before your eyes all the irreparable misfortunes which it will bring to us both, if we have not the courage to separate at once. Listen without interrupting me, and judge for yourself, what it costs me to tell you.

"Born with advantages and some charms, I received quite young the homages of men; they flattered my conceit, and ever since I can remember, I have been a coquette. I married my husband without love, and had for him but a tender friendship which he daily deserves more and more. Of all those who paid me attention, the King of Poland was the most assiduous. The pleasure of getting the better of the most beautiful woman of Warsaw caused me to receive him

with kindness, I, however, did not surrender to him.

"Prince Repnine, the ambassador of Russia, came to Warsaw. He fell in love with me and was ill received. The disturbance which rent my unfortunate country soon gave him the opportunity to prove how dear I was to him. My relatives and my husband angered the Empress greatly, by always opposing her wishes. Prince Repnine received the most severe orders against them. The princes of the Czartoryski house continued in their wrongdoing and were not punished. The Empress, indignant because her orders had not been carried out, commanded prince Repnine to have the princes arrested and to have their property confiscated. She sent him word that his life would answer for his obedience. The princes were lost, if prince Repnine had not had the generous courage to disobey her. I considered myself the reward of so much tenderness; I shall say more, in giving way to gratitude, I thought that I gave way to love.

"I was soon all that was left to prince Repnine. He lost his embassy, his pensions, the

Empress' favour, and, because he loved me, hardly were there left a thousand ducats of income to the man whose display had dazzled all Poland. He could not return to Russia, he asked me to travel and follow him. I did not hesitate to leave all for him. Count Panine, his uncle, reconciled him with the Empress, who sent him word to go and take command of an important corps of marshal de Romanzof's army. He refused and wholly angered the Empress against him. We lived most happily together until he became jealous of comte de Guines; and he was jealous in so violent and insulting a manner, that I was offended; it seemed to me that I deserved more confidence from the man for whom I had sacrificed all. I, however, bore his humour with patience; but the ambassador appeared to me more amiable on account of this trouble, I shall confess it frankly, I was flattered to please him, and I should certainly have loved him if he had loved himself less. I tore myself from the inclination which I felt for him; that which you have taken to me has destroyed it. My heart has but too well felt the difference. I am now cer-

tain to live and to die unhappy, but I shall not cause to die of grief the man who has sacrificed all for me, and to whom there is left but me in the world.

" Flee, forget the woman who, should she follow her inclination, can do nothing for your happiness. Believe me, the love that is not founded on confidence is but a torture; and what right have I to yours? Will you be able to have any in the one who has betrayed prince Repnine, and who has had a liking for M. de Guines? Every mark of love which you receive from me will prove to you, will prove to me, that I can love twice: the woman who has changed once can change again; and do you think that she who has pitilessly abandoned prince Repnine to whom she owed everything, will be more sparing of you, you whose rights will end as soon as her sentiment for you will end? Besides you do not know to what excess I am capable of loving you, and all the misfortunes that may follow such a passion, and all the remorse that will devour me ceaselessly: a veil between the rest of the universe and my lover will hinder me from seeing all that is

not you; the entire forgetfulness of my esteem, of all I owe to my husband, to my children, to my relatives, to myself, the just jealousy of prince Repnine; each day will be marked by fears or by melancholy happenings: can such a life last long?"

"You owe too much to prince Repnine," I replied. "Of the two, it is not he who must die of grief! Let me see you but a few days more, that I may enjoy the last happiness left for me, and I leave you for ever! Remember sometimes that I shall love you to my last breath, and that I lost you; and that I loved you enough to flee from you; I may perhaps have done more for you than prince Repnine. O most tender, most virtuous of creatures! it is your love that shall keep me from being a monster of ingratitude; it is to your generosity that I shall owe my honesty; this is at least a consolation for both of us."

We spoke in good faith; but we did not ourselves know to what excess we loved each other. The two most tender hearts, the most ardent in the world perhaps, had met. We did not find at Antwerp the collection for which the prince

had come there, it was sold; he was told of another at Amsterdam, which might suit him more. This determined him to take advantage of the opportunity to make a trip through Holland. I courageously refused to be one of the party, and held out until the eve of departure. A glance from the princess made me forget all my projects; I accepted the prince's propositions, and the following day we started.

The happiness, the danger of being together had filled our heads with an indescribable agitation and confusion. All our travelling companions were asleep, happily for us, and our trouble was not noticed; the night came and we no longer restrained ourselves. The princess' tears flowed. I mingled mine with hers. Everything to fear, all to suffer, nothing to hope for, our grief overwhelmed us, and did not even leave us the strength to think clearly. We reached a wretched hut at eleven o'clock at night, where we were obliged to spend the night. The princess and Bochdanowitz (the princess' old Polish maid) slept in one room, and all the men in the other.

A few hours after, the maid uttered frightful cries which awoke no one, but I was not asleep, I rushed to see what was the matter; a man, who had hidden in the room, had almost frightened her to death. I drove him out with some difficulty. The princess was awake; she called me, I knelt near her, my eyes could not express all the love which my heart contained, but they showed much.

"Your troubles," she said to me, "rent my soul; but they are dear to me; it is so sweet a thing to me to see you share mine. If we cannot be happy, let us at least be constant and irreproachable."

We promised each other a courage and a prudence much above our strength.

We resumed our journey somewhat more calm, with a more passive demeanour; we reached the Mœrdick, which we crossed at once. I remained in the cabin of the yacht with the princess, and everybody, fearing to be ill, stayed on the deck. I read to her a fine novel by Dorat, which had just been published, entitled: *The Sacrifices of Love.* A few situations had bearing on our po-

sition; and we were unable to read it without a great interest and much emotion.

How many charms were united in Mme. de Czartoryska! Years of misfortune and regrets have not been able to efface the image. We stopped at Rotterdam and arrived the next day at The Hague, where the prince and princess were received with the greatest joy by M. de Lachérésia, the ambassador of Spain. I have nothing but praise to speak of him. Mme. de Lachérésia, a tall, vigorous, and ardent Peruvian, noticed me, and acted towards me, at the end of ten minutes, like an acquaintance of ten years; she did not cease to question the princess with regard to me and to question me also, and she embarrassed us both.

We had been at The Hague two days, when at two o'clock in the morning, Bochdanowitz, who did not speak a word of French, knocked at my door and said to me in bad German:

" Come down, the princess is dying."

The prince was not at The Hague, being in the country at the château of the prince of Orange.

I rushed downstairs, and in truth found her

unconscious. It was some hours before I succeeded in making her recover her senses. She held out her hand to me as soon as she perceived me near her.

"I am happy," she said, "I die in the arms of him whom I love, without having anything of which to reproach myself."

During the day she had frequent fainting spells.

I knew by reputation the celebrated Gaubius, professor of medicine. I went to consult him at Leyden, and left at break of day. I explained to M. Gaubius, in fullest detail, the illness which the princess had had at Spa, and the one she then had, without mentioning her name; he asked me if she was my wife; I replied no, but that she was my sister. He then asked me if I was a physician or a surgeon. I again replied that I was not.

"You are then," said he, "the most tender and most intelligent of brothers."

He reassured me as to the princess' condition, told me that it was not dangerous; that he was too old and gouty to permit of his going to see her.

He ordered a treatment for her the success of which he guaranteed, instructed me to keep him informed of its effect, and told me that he would be very glad to see the patient when she should be less feeble. I returned to The Hague. The princess heard of what I had done with pleasure and gratitude.

It was agreed that I should accompany her as far as Brussels, after having made the trip through Holland last as long as possible, and that then I should leave for Italy. Lovers are like children, it is but at times that they feel a distant grief, and they sacrifice much to the present. Ten or twelve days of happiness seemed to us sufficient to pay for our lives. This short respite quieted us. The princess recovered. I no longer thought of asking anything from her of which she might repent. I saw all her tenderness and desired nothing. At that time, however, I was jealous without any reason, so extravagantly jealous that I can not help speaking of it.

I had seen in London a certain young prince Poniatowski, nephew of the King of Poland, and a cousin to the prince, who had been brought up

in England and to whom I had never paid much attention. Mme. de Czartoryska told me that he was expected at The Hague. This produced no other effect on me than to fear the importunity of a third party. One evening when I was at the play with the prince and princess, someone came to whisper to him that prince Poniatowski had just arrived, and he went out. I can not express the emotion this caused in me. All the accomplishments of prince Poniatowski, all the advantages he possessed to please the princess, with whom he was destined to live, presented themselves to my mind, and turned my head; I left the play and went home. I had fearful thoughts, the princess appeared lost to me, and lost from that very moment. I frightened myself so, that I determined to flee and to leave at once for Italy.

I sent for post horses, and ordered my carriage. It was more than ten o'clock. The princess surprised at not seeing me at Mme. de Lachérésia's, where she was dining, left without saying anything, took the first carriage she found in the courtyard, and came to our inn. She was much surprised to see my chaise ready and standing at

the door. She asked where I was, and went up to my room.

"What does this mean," said she, "and where are you going?"

"To die far from you," I replied with despair, "to flee a greater misfortune than that of being separated from you."

"I do not understand you, explain; you are out of your senses; do you think I can live and see you in the condition in which you now are?"

The princess' eyes showed me all my wrongs, and the many reasons I had to be easy in mind. I was ashamed of my extravagance, and embarrassed to confess it; I was obliged to do so, however. The princess neither reproached nor made jest of me; she embraced me.

"Never be afraid to lose my heart; I am sorry that you should have suffered so; but much do I feel the value of your love. Let us lose no time; we are awaited at the Spanish Embassy; the slightest pretext will suffice to excuse us."

On the way down she said to my valet: "He is not going away," with an indescribable grace.

We departed for Amsterdam, and we stopped

at Leyden to see Dr. Gaubius. He talked with the princess a long time: "There are," said he to her, "some maladies rarely dangerous to women, and which the physicians cannot cure. Your brother," he added, laughing, "knows perhaps more about these than I do." At this the princess blushed. "Be constant and prudent, and you will be happy. I have never seen a woman more dearly loved." He spoke to her of our conversation with interest. Nothing was lost with so tender a heart.

We left late for Amsterdam. The night was dark. I was in the end of a large gondola with the princess; I pressed her hands against my heart, I took her in my arms without her offering any resistance. She went to bed supperless; and, according to custom, I remained near her bed. We embraced with tenderness as soon as we were alone; I could not quell the desires which she seemed to share; I dared much and was soon punished.

"I should never have believed," she said to me, with grief and indignation, "that the being so dear to me should so soon have forgotten his

promises and resolutions; and that he should have been tempted to sacrifice the happiness of my life for a moment's pleasure. It was so sweet to me to owe to your love my virtue and my peace of mind!"

Her maid entered, she said that she wished to sleep and dismissed me.

There is no more awful feeling than to have merited the anger of one whom one loves to excess. I spent the night in sorrow and repentance. The next morning, at eight o'clock, M. Oneski came to get me, and in spite of objections, took me for a walk to see the interesting things of Amsterdam and its environs, until eight o'clock at night. The princess treated me with a coldness which drove me to distraction; she loved me too much to notice it without pitying me. She approached me and whispered:

"See how much I am to be pitied, I am certain that you will not again be guilty; I punish you, I grieve you, I do not wish the courage to do so."

These few words revived me. The supper

was gay, and the departure set for the next day. It was suggested to return in small two-seated cabriolets which one can drive oneself, and which travel very quickly. It was arranged that I should take the princess, I being the best driver. She began by refusing; but she saw so much sorrow in my eyes, that she consented. We departed. I found her serious during the trip. I asked her what was the matter.

"I do not wish to scold you," she replied. "I have forgiven you freely, but so great an impression cannot so easily be effaced, and it is not with you, but with myself that I am displeased, and if I did wrong in having in you a blind confidence, I am very guilty. I have much of which to reproach myself."

I easily dispelled her fears; the most tender tears were the reward. We remained another week at The Hague.

Finally we had to return to Brussels, where, in good faith, we expected to separate for ever. We almost died of despair; I daily coughed up several handkerchiefs of blood. The princess

was in no better condition than I; she almost died the day we crossed the Mœrdick. I spent the night near her.

"We have promised," she told me, "more than we can keep; the excess of your love and courage could yet save my life. Would you be capable (solely loved), not to be jealous of prince Repnine, to be content with my heart, and lay claim to nothing else?"

A new plan of life was arranged with as much good faith as the others, and, as will be seen later, with no greater success. We stopped but one day at Brussels, and returned to Paris.

I left the princess at Senlis, and went to spend twenty-four hours at Haute-Fontaine, a very different man from what I was when I left. The next evening at nine o'clock, I reached Paris; I alighted at l'Hôtel de Chartres where the princess was stopping. I found prince Repnine there. He received me politely; but he appeared cold and constrained. Mme. Czartoryska was in her bed; she pretended to feel badly, said that she wished to sleep, and dismissed us both. She had but the time to give me a small package in which

were a very tender note and a lock of her hair which I had much desired. About eleven o'clock, d'Oraison entered my room:

"I have just left a madman," said he, "whom I have promised to go and reassure early to-morrow morning. This is why I am here so late: prince Repnine has gotten it into his head that you are in love with the princess and that she loves you. I told him that I was certain that such was not the case, that I knew that you had another attachment and, for the sake of greater certainty, I came to speak of the matter to you."

My agitation and confusion informed the chevalier that he had made a mistake.

"You are," said he, "the strangest and most frivolous of men. How about pretty Marianne, do you no longer love her?"

I told him all that had passed since he had left London; he did not blame me, pitied me, and did not reassure me as to the future.

Painful reflections took up my entire night. The next day I called for news of the princess. I found her no better than the evening before. Prince Repnine, whom I met, appeared to me

rather calm. The princess received me coldly. I did not complain of this, and suffered in silence. Several days passed thus without prince Repnine giving me an opportunity to speak to her alone. He seemed satisfied and calm. I neither slept nor ate. I spat much blood; I, however, was anxious to conceal my condition, my blood-stained handkerchief betrayed me.

"What do I see!" she said, as she passed near me. "Come at seven o'clock, I shall be alone, I wish to speak to you."

I was exact at the appointment.

"My friend," said she on entering, "you are very ill; no doubt it is my fault; of two beings very dear to me, one must then die of grief! What is the matter with you? Open your heart to me! I wish it, I demand it, I beg it of you on my knees."

"Nothing is the matter with me," I replied as I pressed her in my arms. "I need but courage, it depends but on you to give me some. Tell me that you love me, I need to hear it."

"Yes, my friend, my tender friend, I love you, I adore you; no power can prevent me from tell-

ing you. Strengthen yourself with patience; persist in a conduct which makes me add to so much affection the most deserved esteem. Your conduct towards prince Repnine is too good; he can neither accuse you of sharpness nor of duplicity. I severely reproach myself the grief I cause you. I, however, spare him as much as I can; it is doubly painful to me not to be frank, and to treat you in his presence in so different a manner. It is to these precautions that I owe the confidence of which, I trust he is still possessed, and whose loss would bring us the most disastrous outcome. Do not be angry, my friend; reason makes remonstrances, but love commands, and whenever it speaks, it is always the strongest. Be careful of a life which is my all; be careful of the blood which I would repurchase with all my own."

"Oh! my friend, your words are like a balm, they restore to me a calm which I thought for ever lost. My heart is not unworthy of yours; it is also capable of generosity. I render to prince Repnine all the justice he deserves. May it please God that he never be unhappy through me! May all the attentions, all consideration be for

him! A glance will console me, will remind me that I am dearer to you than all, will reassure me; if I were unjust, my dear friend, I should never suffer so much as if I knew you to have things of which to reproach yourself."

Prince Repnine arrived when we expected him the least; we were embarrassed at his appearance, and, in spite of ourselves, he noticed it, for, from that moment, he was unable to repress his jealousy; it was such as was to be expected from a man so violent, generous and sensitive. He knew how harmful a scene would be to the princess, he wished to spare it to her, he left the room when he feared to be no longer master of himself. One evening he went to Mme. l'Huillier's.

"I am dying," he said to her. "I can no longer bear the constraint I have imposed on myself; I must open my heart to you. M. de Lauzun adores the princess and is in turn adored by her. He is as proud and jealous as I am; he must hate me. His polite and moderate conduct is the greatest proof of the power your friend has over him, a power she has no doubt purchased with the gift of her heart and person. Vile in-

trigues are not made for two men who must recognise themselves as worthy of her. One of us must perish, or neither one will ever be at peace; he robs me of the only object to which my happiness was attached. I shall defend it."

It was useless for Mme. l'Huillier to try to quiet him; the next day I received the following note:

"My esteem and my hatred are known to you! Let us defend an object we cannot share; one of us must perish by the hand of the other. With confidence I leave to you the choice of time, place, and of arms.

"Nicolas Vassi Lievitch Repnine."

I replied as follows:

"Prince Repnine will not believe me capable of fear. I esteem him sufficiently to refuse the honour he proposes to me. I shall not accept a combat which would compromise a person whom I respect, and which would deprive her of one of her most faithful friends. If the prince attacks me, I shall defend my life in a manner to prove to

him that I do not wish to shed the blood of a man to whom Mme. la princesse Czartoryska owes so much.

"LAUZUN."

After having received my answer, he sent me word to wait for him at home early the next morning. He came in fact to rue Saint-Pierre, where I dwelt; we were left alone and the following conversation began:

"Listen to me, monsieur," said prince Repnine, "and you will not refuse me what I asked. It is my rival, it is my enemy whom I take as judge as to what is left for me to do in the frightful position in which I am. I was appointed Russian ambassador to Poland; at the beginning of the troubles, I saw, I adored the princess; I sacrificed all to the happiness of proving it to her. Her family frequently offended the Empress. I received against her relatives the most severe orders; they were not carried out; I received a harsh reprimand; my head was made responsible for my conduct. The princes Czartoryski continued to repeat the offence and were never pun-

ished. I lost the confidence of my sovereign. I saw the downfall of the most astonishing fortune that had ever been seen in the Russian Empire. I was recalled to justify myself. Only the influence of M. le comte Panine, my uncle, saved my life. The Empress named someone else for the Embassy of Warsaw and I resigned myself to live there as a private individual. . . . However, being generous and tender, the princess Czartoryska considered herself the reward of so many services. . . . I was happy. The Empress ordered me to join Romanzof's army. I refused to obey. All her bounties were withdrawn from me; all that was left was a mediocre pension, sufficient to live, to the man whose display had dazzled Poland. The princess was good enough to leave Warsaw, where I could no longer remain without danger. She travelled, I followed her. Everywhere she received homage, she was never deceived by it. She easily discerned the vanity, fatuity and bad faith of those who rendered them to her. She left for London a few weeks after me; I met you at Calais, we crossed the sea together. The chevalier d'Orai-

son, whom I had long known, had often spoken of you to me; your attachment for beautiful Lady Sarah was known over all England, and rendered you interesting. To fear you was my first feeling. I was soon reassured by seeing you pay court to a young and amiable person. The fatuity of your ambassador caused me no real anxiety. I left for Spa, where you came to join us. While there, the princess was always sad, ill; but I saw you engrossed with Mlle. de Saint-Léger, and did not divine the cause.

"Bound, without being able to excuse myself, to accompany Mme. de Tzernischeff back to Paris, I felt secure enough to the extent of being pleased to have you keep the princess company on her trip. The interest you had shown me, the manner in which we had lived together at Spa, had inspired me with a liking for you; my inclination would have caused me to love you, had fate not forced me to hate you. I received no news from the princess during her entire trip in Holland. Terror seized my soul, the future unfolded before me. I felt certain of my misfortune before I ever had proof of it. Everything has con-

firmed it since our arrival at Paris; the princess loves you. I know her too well not to be aware that she is tormented with remorse; she will not see me without embarrassment, without reluctance. She will suffer unimaginable grief; were it not for you I should still be all for her. If she does not lose either one or the other, she loses us both. I have no plan to hope for in the country I have abandoned for her. As long as I exist, you shall not be the undisturbed possessor of a heart of which you know the value; as long as you live, it will belong more to you than to me; and each instant will be marked by new anxieties and new frenzies."

"Your hatred is just, monsieur," I replied, "and involuntary criminal though I be, I deserve it fully: my heart is, however, not unworthy of you, nor of the homages which it renders to the princess. I have long struggled against a passion which could be followed only by the greatest sorrows. I have counted as one of the greatest that which disturbed the peace which reigned in your heart. Carried away in spite of myself by this unreasonable passion, I have ever before my

eyes the frightful idea of inspiring nothing but remorse; ready to make all sacrifices, I can demand none, I know all your advantages over me, I can only disturb your happiness; but a stranger, necessarily separated from her by circumstances, you would soon have destroyed all mine, could I hope for some. I shall, however, not dishonour, by disputing it, a conquest which, all glorious though it be, must remain unknown. I do not wish that the princess should have to reproach me for having attempted the life of him to whom she owes so much gratitude. Should I perish, my death could be easily justified; and, after having caused yours, the princess would not long survive you. I shall go away, monsieur. I shall go and seek out dangers which will not make me guilty; I pity you, I esteem you, I hate you; but it will only be against my will that I shall fight you, and I warn you that I am and insisted on being unarmed."

"Enough, monsieur," said prince Repnine, "I owe sincerity to so generous an enemy. I shall be careful of Mme. Czartoryska's feelings. I shall not compromise her reputation, but I shall

employ all that is left of my influence over her to make her leave a country where she cannot be happy. I notify you of this, monsieur, and ask your word of honour not to follow her."

"I need promise you nothing, monsieur," I replied. "I shall never hesitate as to what I shall consider necessary to the happiness of the princess, and I alone shall be the judge of that."

Prince Repnine left me and went to the princess; I did not see her alone the remainder of the day. She appeared to be painfully and deeply affected. She was unwell, and locked herself in her room early and would see neither prince Repnine nor me.

Convinced of all her love, she no longer concealed the warmth of her affection, nor that of her desires; she no longer sought to hinder mine; to ruin oneself was nothing, I had to be certain of being adored.

I was about to absent myself for a week, and this effort was beyond my courage; I was still in the regiment of *gardes françaises,* and shortly I would be compelled to go on duty at Fontainebleau. The princess felt only the necessity of

reassuring me by giving herself up to me. I have awful moments to recall; I tremble while writing, but a sacred oath imposes this terrible task on me.

It was the 5th of November. I was to leave two days after for Fontainebleau. Contrary to her usual habit, the princess had ordered her door closed to everyone, even to prince Repnine. I was alone with her; I reproached her with being sad and serious with me.

"I can not love you! I am yours," said she to me; "enjoy all your rights, you must, I wish it."

I rushed into her arms. I was happy, or, rather, the crime was consummated. Let people judge of the horror of my lot, even while possessing the woman I idolised. She did not have a moment's pleasure; her tears bathed her face, she pushed me away.

"It is all over," said she to me; "there are no longer any limits to my wrongdoings, there will no longer be any to my misfortunes; leave the house."

I wanted to remain. She cast herself at my feet:

"Leave, in the name of God, leave!"

Fontainbleau.

Struck as by lightning, I dared not reply; I returned home, my night was a torture which I alone can still conceive. I returned to her house early the next morning; the curtains of her bed were closed, I trembled as I drew them aside. She was unconscious; blood was trickling from her mouth onto her breast; a little box lying open on her bed informed me that she had taken poison.

I thought her dead, and I swallowed what was left in the box with avidity. I had a violent nervous attack throughout the whole night.

I do not know what became of me during twenty-four hours. I only know that I did not leave my bed, and that I threw up much blood; which, from all appearances, saved my life.

Mme. de Lauzun came to get me, to take me to Fontainebleau, where I was to go with her. I was in a state of depression and stupidity which did not allow me to think of remaining behind. I requested Mme. de Lauzun to wait for me a moment. I arose and dressed with much difficulty, and I was able to have news of the princess. She was still in a dying condition. I went away, however; at Fontainebleau I was like a madman.

Except during the time of my service, I saw no one, I was really very ill. While at Fontainebleau I received a letter from the princess, which I think it well to quote here.

"Oh, my friend, my lover! You whom I idolise, you who combine all the affections of my heart, you are no longer near me! You have gone, I have wished it, why did you obey me! Had I then to do something for duties which I have wholly violated! Of all the horrors that surround me those of death are the least frightful; if you knew what future opens up before me! I have lost all hope, all right of being happy. I dare no longer promise anything. I have betrayed my pledges! At least may your love, may your happiness serve me in the place of what I have lost. But, alas! I speak of the future and I am dying! I shall not have the barbarous courage to order you to live; I know not what is taking place within me, everything feels strange. I feel my last breath coming on lips still burning with your kisses. Come, do not lose a minute; let us die in each other's arms, that happiness and pleas-

ure may be our last. No, do not listen to senseless desires. May my remorse, at least, expiate my wrongdoing. May the courage of no longer being guilty give me back, at the expense of my life and of my happiness, some little esteem for myself!"

This letter, written with a trembling hand, wet with her tears, completed my distraction. I left for Paris alone, as soon as the night had come. I advised the princess of a place where we might see each other in safety. Her weakness was extreme; she fainted repeatedly. I was hardly any stronger. I shall not take advantage of the patience of those who read these pages, if they have never loved, perhaps even if they do not love at the moment they read this, they will find me very tiresome. I shall therefore be content with saying that this conversation did us much good and much harm. I returned to Fontainebleau; I performed my service, which appeared to me to last for centuries, and I came back. Our conduct during some weeks was circumspect. Prince Repnine was generous. The frightful change of which I

was the cause, the certainty that I did not see the princess alone, the prospect of her leaving soon, quieted him; he pitied me and recovered his tranquillity.

He was mistaken, however. I sometimes saw Mme. Czartoryska, alone or outside of her home; the wisdom of my conduct, my moderation had banished the dangers which she had so prodigiously feared. Love and nature have rights from which one cannot escape. How can one refuse anything to the lover one adores, especially when he asks for nothing! The princess gave herself up to me, ready to suffer all. In the future, our days appeared to us rewarded by so much happiness! Incapable of anything else, I saw the princess or waited for her, and whenever I lost hope of seeing her before the next morning, I went to bed; my body unequal to the fatigue of being away from her.

Prince Repnine had some suspicions. The princess noticed that he was having her followed; all appeared preferable to her than the horror of deceiving. She reached the terrible decision to confess all to him; this confession made by a gen-

erous heart, was received by a generous heart. Prince Repnine did not permit himself a complaint nor a reproach.

"Be happy," he said to her; "I do not flatter myself of having the courage to be a witness to your happiness. I shall leave in two weeks; I shall join the Russian army."

We did not think it well to exhibit to the eyes of this generous man the object and the cause of his unhappiness and troubles; I made an effort which I thought beyond my strength, I consented to go to M. de Choiseul's, at Chanteloup, until the departure of prince Repnine.

I went away; I daily received word from the princess; I suffered, and I was not living far from her. I returned and found prince Repnine gone. Whoever has not experienced a harsh constraint cannot feel the full value of freedom. My happiness was no longer disturbed but by the fear of the future, and by the horrible certainty of seeing it soon end. We were ceaselessly engrossed with plans of how never to separate. We sometimes had hope; but the fate of her charming children always stopped us. Her care was so touching, it

was so necessary to them! Accustomed to love all that was my mistress', I strongly attached myself to her children. I thought it but right to share the duties of their mother; my eyes filled with tears as I caressed them. I preferred to meet the troubles which were then overwhelming me than to deprive them of a mother that one cannot reasonably compare with any other. She penetrated the sentiments that filled my soul; they added new rights over her. She knew that I should gladly have given up half my life so that there might be left to me one of the precious children of whom it seemed to me I was the father. We were always together; we went out riding twice a day to escape troublesome visitors, of whom it was impossible to get rid.

The date of her departure for Poland came: her husband stayed behind on account of a lawsuit. I resolved to accompany her as secretly and as far as I could; in fact, I only left her at two leagues from Warsaw. This voyage had been charming, and the princess had daily been more tender and amiable. The moment of our separation was terrible.

"My friend," said she to me, "I must at last reveal to you a secret I have been at great pains to conceal. You have so wished for one of my children, you will have it. I wish to leave you the dearest, the better part of myself; I am enceinte, and have not lived with my husband since I surrendered to you! I shall have the courage to confess everything to my husband, and to obtain that the dearest token of our love be returned to you."

People must understand my heart, if they wish to judge of the impression made on me by this speech. It exhausted my strength in a moment; I fainted, and, when I came to my senses, the princess was gone. Her father-in-law, who had come to meet her, had compelled her to abandon me; she had left one of her servants behind to care for me. I was in a state of dejection from which nothing could draw me; I allowed myself to be taken back as far as Breslau, without eating or drinking, or uttering a single word; I stopped there, and waited for news of the princess. They to some extent restored me to my normal condition, and I continued my way to Frankfort, where

I learned that the King was dangerously ill with the small-pox.

I heard of his death while passing at Deux-Ponts. This disarranged all my projects. I was not in a fit state to pay my court to the new King, and I rejoined the Royal Legion, of which I was colonel, at Mouzon,[23] in Champagne; I lived there in the greatest privacy, and saw only the officers of my regiment. My time was divided between my military duties and the princess. I knew her to be sad, ill, but she wrote by every mail. Finally several brought me no news; I sent a messenger, who covered the distance with the utmost speed. I learned on his return that the princess had been dangerously ill, and that the only person who could give me news of her was not at her side. Her strength had succumbed to the terrible confession she had made her husband. It had been received by him with tenderness and generosity, but vapours, nervous attacks, a mortal sadness, combined with the discomfort of her condition, had brought her to a most deplorable state. She was most anxious to see me, but did not think it possi-

ble. I asked M. de Conflons, under whom I served, if he could give me three weeks' leave of absence, which I should be very glad to spend in the country near Frankfort.

I went away alone and as secretly as possible. On the last day I got lost, and I went to ask my way at a house in which I saw a light. I was much surprised to find an English family and to learn that it was that of the princess' gardener. I well knew that it was not difficult to enter the park, but I did not wish to be recognised; I feared to be arrested by the patrols of cossacks and of being unable to reach her without revealing my identity. It was eleven o'clock at night; I saw the different troops which had just been making their rounds, returning, and I slipped into the garden, where I was directly attacked by two big dogs which were let loose every night. One of these I had given to the princess while in England. I called it by name; Cæsar recognised me and came to caress me; the other dog withdrew, and I approached the house; I saw two women who were taking a walk; one of these went in; I recognised

her as Mme. Parisot, a maid whom I had recommended to the princess, and the other came towards me.

" Come," said she to me, " neither obstacles nor distance can deceive my heart; it was awaiting you."

The princess pressed me in her arms.

" The needs of my heart always make me devine your acts; it was impossible that you should leave to me the frightful idea of all that separated us, that you should not come to lend new charms to my retreat, my sole consolation."

I spent forty-eight hours at Powonski![24] There everything was interesting to me; I had to leave it. I had taken measures so as to be sure of being at her lying-in, or at least to be near her.

I returned a little more calm than the first time; back to my regiment I procured all the memoirs concerning the affairs of Poland, of Prussia and of Russia; and by means of a great number of good and bad books which I had the patience to read, I arranged a political plan on the interests of the three powers. I prepared a rather

long report, which I addressed to prince Adam.[25] He communicated it to M. de Stackelberg, Russian minister at Warsaw, who sent it to Moscow without my knowledge. The hope of becoming ambassador or minister of France at Warsaw gave me for my work a tireless ardour. The princess approved of my plan, and each mail brought me new encouragement.

In the month of September, she advised me that she was less satisfied with her husband's conduct; that my last voyage had become known, and that she feared that the one I wished to make for her lying-in might have great inconveniences; but that she would die of grief if I did not make it. I departed towards the end of September, and found at Strasburg a letter from the princess which had come by messenger, and which earnestly requested me to delay my departure. I found another at Frankfort which frightened me even more as to the ill disposition of the prince. Nothing could influence me to remain away from the princess during the time of her lying-in. I sent her a Pole, named Muskowski, whom I had brought with me, and I went to wait for him at

a small free town built on the Vistula and called Thorn.

I there received the princess' reply. She informed me that she could not be so near without wishing to see me; no matter what the danger, that it was important that I should be seen by no one, that Mme. l'Huillier would conceal me in her house, and that she would come to see me there. I did not lose a moment to reach it; anxiety, agitation, fatigue, had changed me to the point of being unrecognisable.

"You will not see your princess this evening," said the compassionate Mme. l'Huillier, embracing me; "she has rather sharp pains on account of which she has been ordered to bed; they will probably pass during the night, and she will be here early to-morrow morning."

The next day, on the contrary, the pains increased, and it was with great difficulty that I succeeded in entering the blue palace, where Mme. Parisot locked me in a large wardrobe, behind the princess' bed. Her travail lasted almost thirty-six hours. I heard her cries and it seemed as if each one would be the last. I shall not un-

dertake to describe what went on in my mind. My misfortunes were the fruit of my crimes; she whom I loved more than all on earth was their victim. The torture finally ceased; I was drawn from my prison, and allowed to see Mme. Czartoryska. I bathed her face with my tears. I could not utter a single word.

"You have saved my life," she said to me. "I knew you to be here. I owed my strength only to the courage inspired me by the certainty of my being so near you; could I be without it, feeling sure that you would receive my last sigh. Kiss that child, who is already more dear to me than all the others! It would be dangerous for him should you be discovered! Leave, go and locate yourself at eight leagues from here, at a farm of which I can dispose. This note will cause you to be received by the good people who live in it. We shall see each other soon; you shall receive news of me daily."

I slowly betook myself to my new refuge. I found a plain house, but clean to the verge of elegance. I was received by a man of about sixty years, of venerable mien; his wife, a little younger

than he, appeared to have been beautiful. Two young women with pleasant faces, and a little girl, composed this honest family: I delivered my letter; it was as follows:

"Monsieur Ombowski, I beg you to receive in your house the bearer of this note. I confide to you what I have dearest in the world, and my confidence in your care and in your discretion is unlimited.

"Isabelle Czartoryska."

"You are at home here," said the good M. Ombowski to me; "you may even dispose of our persons, for we belong to the princess much more because of our gratitude than because of her benefactions."

I withdrew to my room without being able to partake of supper. The next day I received news of the princess. She was as well as could be expected.

I was taking a walk in the rather large garden with M. Ombowski. He told me his story. He had been born with a fortune sufficient to his am-

bition. He had married for love a young girl of quality from Kaminick, and had had several children by her.

There was no happier lot than his, when prince Radziwill, to whom he had been attached for a long time, urged him to enter the confederation of Bar. Two young Poles, who loved his two daughters to distraction, thought they could give no greater proof of their devotion than by following the father. They were wounded, taken prisoners, and all three sent to Siberia; their house burned down, their lands devastated by the Russians, and all their property confiscated by the Empress. Mme. Ombowski, who was from Kaminick, an estate belonging to the princess, whom she had seen in her childhood at the home of comte Flemming, her father, went to throw herself at her feet with her daughters, and had no difficulty in moving a heart so generous and compassionate. The princess undertook with warmth the mending of the misfortunes of that unhappy family; she obtained their pardon, had the men recalled from Siberia, married the two daughters to their lovers, for whom she secured two impor-

tant places in Lithuania, and gave to M. Ombowski and his wife a very pretty piece of property where they all lived, and where they ever blessed their benefactress. Since I have lived among men, I have never seen any who appreciated their happiness more, and for whom gratitude had greater charms.

I daily received word from Mme. Czartoryska, and the attentions of my hosts rendered my stay with them very agreeable. I spent a month without impatience in this quiet place. One day when I was anxious at not having received a letter from the princess, I saw her appear incognito. A divinity descended into this house would have been less adored. We were left alone.

"My friend," said she to me, "I owe you a long explanation; I had the courage to make to my husband the avowal I had intended; he had pity of the awful state in which I was as I spoke to him, and did not reproach me. 'I shall leave you that child,' he told me,* 'if you so desire; but you must agree by the most sacred oath never to see his father.'

* The child was in fact left with the princess.

" My tears were my sole answer; could I promise to abandon you! You know my husband! Embittered by wicked people, he may have a moment of anger; but the foundation of his character is good and indulgent. He is not jealous, and will soon see you without repugnance. Spend a little time at Dresden and Berlin; let not Warsaw appear to be the sole aim of your voyage, and I shall soon again be able to press you in my arms."

A girl baby was born to the elder daughter of M. Ombowski while this conversation was going on.

We held the child over the baptismal font, and we called the child, who was a girl, Isabelle — Armande — Fortunée, after the princess, me and chance which had given her a godfather and godmother. The princess left for Warsaw, and I, the next morning, for Dresden.

The city and the Elector are as sad as the Electress is gay. I was soon in great favour with her; the circumspection with which I received the distinctions with which she overwhelmed me was much appreciated by the Elector. The Electress

thought it necessary to speak more plainly. One court day, she led me to the recess of a window:

"For a Frenchman you are neither gallant nor penetrating," said she to me.

And as I did not reply,

"Is it then necessary to question in order to obtain a few words from you? Is it possible that there should be no woman in this Court to whom you are attentive?"

"Nothing is more true, madame."

"And why, I pray?"

"The old ones do not tempt me and the young all have lovers."

"All! You know nothing of the sort; I know some who have none, and who perhaps might wish your court, if they could believe it sincere. Guess," she added, looking at me with much expression.

The approach of the Elector interrupted this conversation, which people were beginning to notice. I thought it best not to expose the Electress to a second one, and I left Dresden for Berlin.

I received news from the princess regularly; but she did not yet permit me to go to Warsaw.

I earnestly applied myself to the study of the military and interior administration of Prussia; I sent several reports to M. le maréchal de Muy and to M. de Vergennes, in the absence of M. de Pons, King's minister at Berlin.

Mme. de Hartefeld, lady of honour to the Queen of Prussia, who formerly had had a great passion for M. le comte Guines, knowing that I had married his niece, considered herself obliged to tender me the greatest civility. Confidence having been established, she confided to me all the details of her attachment for M. de Guines, and ended by taking a liking to me. The princess' letters were no rarer; but they all tended to delay the date of my voyage to Poland.

I became very intimate with M. Harris, England's minister, whose society made all the charm of my sojourn in Berlin. He took me everywhere and I was soon as well established as I could have been in Paris. The King returned from Potsdam; I often had the honour of paying court to him, he treated me with kindness and distinction; prince Henry took me into his friendship. I spent much time in his company, and I heard him

always speaking of war and military matters, with renewed admiration. He was good enough to tell me that the King wished me to consider becoming minister of France to him, and that he had given him permission to inform me that he would gladly have all measures taken so that I might succeed! This in no way agreed with my plans. I thanked and I declined, giving as reason that I was much attached to the military career, and that I felt no talent for politics. Prince Henry was kind enough to insist on several occasions; but without making me change my decision.

In this interval, Mademoiselle de Hartefeld, whom I saw frequently, took a great fancy to me; I was far from returning it. I did not conceal from her that I loved another. Such an admission did not diminish her attachment. I was grateful and touched by this; and considered that I owed her the deepest friendship. I consoled her, I pitied her, but I did not become her lover, and I did not for a moment cease to adore the princess. People judge according to appearances, and soon no one in Berlin doubted that Mlle. de Hartefeld was my mistress; Mme. Czartoryska was ad-

vised to that effect. She believed it, wrote me a very cold letter, in which she said that we must discontinue all relations, and earnestly requested me not to come to Warsaw.

Forsaken by the princess, I almost died of grief. I would have given up my life to speak to her a quarter of an hour; twenty projects, each more extravagant than the other, presented themselves to my mind. I loved the princess too dearly not to be influenced by the fear of compromising her. I therefore obeyed, and decided to return to France. On the eve of the day set for my departure, M. de Rullecourt, a French officer in the service of Poland, came as special messenger to bring me a letter from prince Adam, who asked me, as the greatest mark of friendship I could give him, to come and spend twenty-four hours at Warsaw on business of the greatest importance, adding that I could easily remain concealed there, should I not wish to be recognised. I did not hesitate a moment and left the same evening. I sent all my servants to Leipsic, and only kept with me a single Polish footman whom I had hired at Berlin. I preferred an open carriage to all others, as being

the lightest. I hardly noticed the excessive cold from which many unfortunates perished. The hope of seeing the princess had absorbed all my feelings, both physical and moral. I reached Mariville and concealed myself there at the house of M. de Rullecourt.

Prince Adam came to see me there immediately. He told me that he had communicated to M. de Stackelberg the report relating to the affairs of Poland and of Russia which I had previously sent him; that this minister had forwarded it to his Court, where it had made such an impression, that he had thought it well to confer with me about it, having no doubt if France should be the least willing, that the partition of Poland could be set right, and a great portion of the existence it had lost restored to that power. I replied to the prince that I should see M. le baron de Stackelberg with pleasure, but that I had no power, and that it was difficult for me to devine the intentions of a minister whom I hardly knew. M. de Stackelberg came during the night; we talked a long time. The result of our conversation was a report which I sent to Versailles, and he to Moscow. It was

impossible for me to remain concealed until the return of our respective messengers; I therefore had myself presented at Court and went everywhere.

Mme. Czartoryska was in the country, from whence she returned only two days after; she came to the play. I cannot express the emotion her presence caused me. I visited her in her box; she received me very coldly; it was but with difficulty that I obtained permission to see her alone. The next day she refused to listen to my justification; she demanded that I return her letters and portrait. I did all she asked, and locked myself in my room in the most gloomy despair. She sent for me the next morning; I found her more calm and less severe. She asked me all the details of what had occurred between Mademoiselle de Hartefeld and me. I burned in her presence her portrait and letters and promised to do the same with all those she might write to me. Mademoiselle de Hartefeld is the only woman towards whom I have behaved ill, which she assuredly did not deserve; therefore have I often and severely reproached myself.

The princess forgave me, with that grace which

is inseparable from her every act. I wished to enter in possession of my former rights; but she absolutely refused.

"You would grieve me," said she; "you would be lost, if in your arms, something should again disturb my happiness."

M. Braniski, grand general of the Crown, was more in love with her than ever, and daily showed it by new extravagances. The princess treated him badly and seldom received him; but the entire circle of the Palatine of Polosk, in which Mme. Czartoryska mingled much, was wholly devoted to him. It was the only house in Warsaw to which no attempt was made to draw me. The princess Poniatowska joined the circle; and the princess was so beset by all this, that the conduct which she had to resort to took away a great part of the time which we might have spent together.

I grieved at this; I thought it was her fault. I complained of her to Lulli:

"She loves you," said she to me, "but you are an object of which she is too avaricious. A little jealousy will render her more tender than ever, and will give her the courage to put aside all those

who wish to keep her away from you. Go more into society; see to it that the women seem not so utterly indifferent to you; you will be the better off for it."

I unfortunately followed the advice of Lulli. The lover of Mme. Czartoryska could not help but attract the curiosity of the other women; several made me rather marked advances, among these a certain young comtesse Potoska Plumaska, who was the niece of Mme. la générale Oliniska, at whose house I called continually, and where I always found her. I pretended to be much interested in her; the princess noticed it, and said nothing. The little woman was much of a coquette, and was much that way towards me.

I gave her my arm at a masked ball, where she spoke to me of the conditions on which she consented to give herself to me, and even to follow me to France; I did not think I had made such headway, and I did not wish matters to go so far. I therefore evaded the question, without giving a positive answer. A small mask somewhat near me rose suddenly, and was lost in the crowd. I paid no attention to it and shortly after left the

ball. The next day, as usual, I went to take a walk at Pavoansky. It was my greatest pleasure. The princess reached there a few moments after me; but as soon as she perceived me, she had her carriage turn back. I made as if to approach, but she ordered her coachman to go to Warsaw as quickly as possible; I did not know what this meant. I called at her house three times that day without seeing her; I wrote her that I could not comprehend her conduct. She replied:

"I have seen, I have heard, what I should never have believed; you deceive me for Mme. Plumaska."

"You are the cause of my undoing," I told Lulli.

I returned to my room; a terrible fever possessed me, and I had the most fearful transports. Lulli heard of it and went to the princess:

"What have you done!" she said to her; "Lauzun is dying and it is your work."

Mme. Czartoryska came to me, spent the day and the entire night at my side, without my recognising her. I at last saw her on her knees near

my bed, bathed in tears. So sudden a change from despair to joy almost cost me my life; I recovered with difficulty; the tender and touching care of the princess made me prefer my extreme weakness to the strength I had lost, and which I was beginning to regain. M. Braniski was jealous of this, complained openly, dared to threaten my life.

"I do not love you," she said to him; "do not force me to hate you."

"That suffices, madame," he replied with fury; "I shall see if M. de Lauzun is worthy of possessing an object which I would purchase with all my blood."

"Yes, monsieur," retorted the princess haughtily; "he knows that my life is attached to his; he will know how to defend it; I demand nothing more from you."

M. Braniski calmed down, and nothing happened. I was warned, however, that the great general held nothing sacred; that I had everything to fear from the crowd of cutthroats by which he was constantly surrounded. I was advised not to

go abroad without an escort; I took the precaution of going well armed, that was all; nothing happened to me.

I mingled more with society; the manner in which the princess treated me increased the curiosity which I inspired in all the women of Warsaw anxious to see me. A review of hussars was an occasion which brought together a large number of these. They then returned to the reception, at Mme. la générale's. The princess seemed to ask them how they liked her choice, with a grace that deserved their interest . . . and their indulgence. While picking up something the feather which was in my hat fell into the fire. Mme. de Plumaska, whom I had not met since the scene which had cost me so much, offered me a rather handsome heron's feather, which she wore in her hair, saying with eagerness: "Let us change feathers."

"I beg your pardon for not consenting to the offer," I replied coldly; "I am attached to my burnt feather."

Mme. Czartoryska, who had heard me, said to me with a charming glance:

"Give me your hat so that I may put mine in it; I now prefer the burnt feather."

M. Braniski arose with anger, and went out.

In the evening, at the masked ball at the Opera, he appeared to wish to pick a quarrel with me.

"Let us end this, monsieur le général," said I, "five minutes at Vola will suffice. The means will be more worthy of you and of me than a dispute at the ball."

He accepted and we made an appointment for the next morning at eight o'clock. All Warsaw soon heard of the affair and prepared to act as witness to it. The King was much grieved on hearing of the matter, and at six o'clock in the morning sent for M. Braniski, with whom he had a long conversation, after which the grand général came to my house, with quite a numerous suite, to tell me that he publicly withdrew all the remarks at which I might have taken offence, and that he asked my friendship, which he merited by his esteem and his consideration for me. I had nothing more to say: I was obliged to give in and prince Casimir Poniatowski, brother of the

King, made us embrace and make up. Mme. Czartoryska had sent me in the morning a superb Turkish horse with a pair of pistols and a sword, with a word wishing me good luck.

That same evening, our messengers from Versailles and Moscow arrived. The Empress approved my propositions, wrote me a letter full of kind expressions, and sent me very extensive powers. M. de Vergennes[26] requested me to return to Court as promptly as possible. I set my departure for two days after in the evening. I dined at Pavoanski with the princess. I held her long in my arms; I finally had to leave her; I tore myself from Pavoanski with a grief which the hope of seeing her soon again could not mitigate, and which was a genuine presentiment that we would never more see each other.

CHAPTER VI

CHAPTER VI

(1775)

I REACHED Versailles at the end of the month of March, 1775. M. de Vergennes, whom I did not know, received me with all the interest which the important affairs with which I was charged, must naturally have inspired. He praised my conduct, and advised me to leave for Saint Petersburg within a few days, but he soon changed his mind; he did not care that the treaty should be made by me, and that I should remain King's minister to the Empress of all the Russians, who seemed very desirous of having me as such. M. de Juniez, his intimate friend, had just been appointed to that post. M. de Vergennes daily raised absurd difficulties, allowed matters to drag along and wished to have that negotiation broken, without it seeming to be his fault. During that time I lost a lawsuit representing eighty thousand

livres income; I was little affected by this; my wealth was what interested me least.

On my return I had found the Queen on very intimate terms with Mme. la princesse de Guéménée and Mme. Dillon; they had sometimes spoken to her of me, and had inspired her with the curiosity of knowing me better. She received me with kindness; I frequently had the opportunity of meeting her at Mme. de Guéménée's, where she treated me with distinction; I regularly went riding with her, and in less than two months I became a sort of favourite. My favour was, however, interrupted by the necessity of rejoining my regiment. The revolts on account of the wheat, in the villages in the neighbourhood of Paris had caused the troops to be ordered on the march. The Queen desired that my corps be brought near, and that I should not go away; I did not think it well to consent to this, and took leave. She seemed really grieved at this, and on the afternoon of the same day she came to Montreuil, at Mme. de Guéménée's to bid me good-bye, and offer to ask the King to permit me to return for the coronation, which I refused.

The affairs of Russia appeared to be forgotten, I uselessly pressed M. de Vergennes to settle the matter and give me a decisive answer: he told me that he had the treaty more than ever at heart and that he hoped to conclude in the course of the Summer; that the King would recall me from my regiment, should it be necessary. On the very evening I was to leave, the Queen sent me word to delay my departure twelve more hours, and to call on her the following morning at Montreuil.

"Do not go yet," said she to me with much graciousness; "the revolt on account of the grain makes it compulsory to bring troops near: we shall have your corps ordered here."

I thanked her, and replied that if it were not necessary, I did not desire a removal which might be disadvantageous to my legion.

"You are a fool," she answered laughing.

Baron de Vioménil, charged by M. le maréchal de Muy with the movements of the troops, entered.

"Baron," said she to him, "*do* make the royal legion march, and make it come near enough that this fool may not leave us, as he intends."

The baron replied that he would carry out her orders, and appeared astonished; I begged him to make no changes in his plans. I again went hunting in the Bois de Boulogne with the Queen; she spoke to me throughout the entire time; and from that moment my favour was so noticed, that it was perhaps fortunate for me that I left during that night.

The princess' letters became shorter and less frequent; I received information from Warsaw that she was wholly under the subjection of the Palatine of Polosk and that M. Braniski spent all his time at her house, I wrote her a strong letter about the matter; my remonstrances were ill received. Cut to the quick, I replied with despair and indignation. I dared to ask for my child; "I did not wish," I said in my letter, "that he should be brought up among my enemies." I was unable to obtain him. We fell out and ceased to correspond.

I returned to Paris, and my return to Court was at least as brilliant as had been my departure. A race of French horses, in which my horse won, put me in the fashion. The Queen appeared anxious

to see some races, and many were arranged for the following Spring. I went to Fontainebleau, where my favour began to have the publicity which since has made me so many enemies.

M. de Vergennes had wholly broken the treaty with Russia, and, although offended, the Empress gave it up only with regret. I sincerely attached myself to the Queen, whose bounties and confidence touched me. I wished her to govern a great empire, make her play at twenty a part so brilliant that she would be forever celebrated. In short, I wished her to become the arbiter of Europe; but the more I was desirous of covering her with glory, the more easy it seemed that I should make the road which was to conduct to immortality. I made bold to write to the Empress of Russia, and ask her if she wished to continue after her the empire of the world in the hands of a woman. I pointed out an easy way. It was necessary that a treaty advantageous to France, and of which Russia should not be ashamed, signed by the Empress and invested with the required formalities, be deposited in the hands of the Queen of France, and that with such weapons,

she should have the courage to plead before the King and his Council a cause without rejoinder. I had made no mistake in counting on the Empress; she received my propositions with eagerness, honoured me with full powers, and gave me no other instructions than to ally through the Queen, at whatever cost, her empire to hers. The Queen did not listen to me without astonishment: the development of so vast a plan impressed her. She asked for time to reflect, and I saw that all was lost. There was nothing, however, that I cared less to risk than to have the slightest reproach of negligence or of impatience to make myself, and I waited.

My favour, however, appeared to be rising to the highest degree. The Queen did not think she could do too much for a man who wished to do all for her. Perhaps did she give way as much to a particular inclination (inspired more by the strangeness of my existence than by any other motive) than to what she considered a duty. She rarely went out without me, did not permit me to leave the Court, which was then at Fontainebleau, always made room for me near

PRINCESS DE LAMBALLE.

her at the gaming table, spoke to me continually, came every evening to Mme. de Guéménée's, and showed displeasure when there were enough people to disturb her attention for me. It was impossible for such conduct to pass unnoticed; still, as my ways were not familiar, as I did not intrigue, as I asked for nothing either for myself or for anyone, the greedy crowd of courtiers, before declaring itself for or against me, sought if it could secure nothing through my credit.

Mme. la princesse de Lamballe, superintendent of the Queen's Household and her then intimate friend, came to Fontainebleau, gave a supper to those whom the Queen best treated and invited me. The Queen told me to go; I knew Mme. de Lamballe too well not to believe that it was inconsiderate; and did not attend. The Queen took me there the next day, and said on introducing me:

"I ask you to love as a brother, the man on earth whom I love best, and to whom I owe the most: let your confidence in him be boundless as mine is."

Mme. de Lamballe had the right to look upon

this introduction as the most important confidence, and to believe me infinitely dearer to the Queen than I was in reality. Her conduct conformed to this idea.

At that time, M. le chevalier de Luxembourg, formerly well received by the Queen and still a sort of favourite of M. le comte d'Artois, asked for a private audience to detail the plan which he had made of placing M. le comte d'Artois on the throne of Poland. The Queen listened to him with embarrassment and agitation, and answered him coldly that she did not wish to meddle with affairs of state. She sent for me, and related the conversation she had just had with him; I took advantage of the opportunity to press her for an explanation with regard to the treaty with Russia, and I saw with inexpressible grief how much beyond her strength and courage was the matter; she exhibited so much fear and so little strength of character, that from then on I could no longer count on her. The Queen, however, thought that she had to occupy herself with my fortune, and a few days after proposed to me, at Mme. de Guéménée's, to obtain from the King, for me,

the reversion of the company of *gardes du corps* of M. le duc de Villeroy. I thanked her and replied that under no circumstances would a command at Court be to my liking, she asked me why:

"It is, madame," I replied, "because I wish to be in a position to withdraw, when I cease to be in favour there, when Your Majesty no longer protects me."

"This reason is offensive," she said with feeling; "and you say this to *me?*"

"Yes, madame, I know the infallible power of intrigue: I must expect to be its victim, to see the Queen withdraw the confidence and protection with which she honours me, and I do not wish that a single graciousness, a single favour, a single reward for my services, should some day leave to my enemies a pretext for saying that I was an intriguer!"

This conversation was interrupted and was soon renewed, towards the end of the same week.

Mme. la princesse de Bouillon reproached me at Mme. de Guéménée's with being sad and absorbed, and said to me laughingly that I must have a *grande passion* in my heart.

"If that be so," I replied jestingly, "it is unsuccessful, for it must be agreed that I rarely see its object."

"That is not the general report," retorted Mme. de Bouillon, "and it is assured that you are very well received."

"At least, tell me the name of my passion, it is but just that I also should know it."

"Too great a personage is in question that I should dare to name her; there are, however, so few people in the room, that I am willing to confide to you that it is the Queen."

Mme. de Guéménée blushed and became embarrassed.

"It is necessary then," I said as coldly as possible, "that she should be informed of this great news, and I am at once going to tell her of it without quoting anyone, of course." I said this while looking straight at Mme. de Bouillon, who appeared wholly disconcerted, and left the room.

I went up to the Queen's apartments and met her going to evening service. I begged her to grant me a half hour's audience after the service.

She told me to wait for her, made me enter her cabinet as soon as she returned, saying:

"What is the news?"

"I thought it my duty to inform Your Majesty that people have dared to wrongly interpret my boundless attachment to her person, and they have gone so far as to blame the favours with which she honours me. I make bold to beg her to decrease its too striking marks, and to permit me to present myself before her less frequently."

"What's that you say?" she retorted angrily; "must I give way to insolent remarks which I should not fear? and would I be excusable to sacrifice to these the man in the world on whom I most depend and whose attachment is most necessary?"

"Yes, Your Majesty must do so, and I had to expect it; however fearful it may be to me to renounce to the sweetness of consecrating to her my services and life, I must do so, and take advantage, since circumstances demand it, of the refuge offered me by a great princess, and flee the persecutions that are everywhere being prepared for me in my country."

"You then believe that I shall not defend you?"

"I make bold to beg Your Majesty, I make bold to demand as a sole reward for my absolute devotion, that she abstain from compromising herself in supporting me; I suffice to defend myself."

"How! you wish me to show cowardice . . . No, monsieur de Lauzun, our cause is inseparable; people will not ruin you without ruining me."

"Oh! madame, can the private interest of a subject be compared to the great interests of a Queen! . . ."

"Of a subject such as you are, Lauzun! Do not abandon me, I beg you; what will become of me if you should abandon me . . ."

Her eyes were full of tears. Moved to the depth of my very soul I cast myself at her feet.

"Why cannot my life pay for so much kindness!"

She held out her hand to me, I kissed it several times with fervency, without changing my position, she bent towards me with much tenderness. She was in my arms when I arose. I pressed her

closely to my breast, she blushed, but I saw no anger in her eyes.

"Well," she finally asked moving away from me, "shall I obtain nothing?"

"Can you believe that," I replied with much warmth, "am I my own master? Are you not all to me? You alone do I wish to serve, you are my sole sovereign. Yes," I continued more sadly, "you are my Queen, you are the Queen of France."

Her looks seemed to ask another title. I felt tempted to take advantage of the happiness that offered itself. Two considerations restrained me: I have never wished to win a woman through an instant of which she might repent, and I could not bear the idea that Mme. Czartoryska should believe herself sacrificed to ambition. I therefore recovered quickly.

"I shall make no plans, without Your Majesty's orders; she shall dispose of my fate."

"Withdraw," she said to me; "this conversation has lasted long enough, and has perhaps been but too well noticed."

I made a profound bow and withdrew.

Locked in my room, all the dangers which I had just run presented themselves to my imagination and, although my conduct had been most imprudent, I found myself very happy that it had not been worse.

My situation daily became more difficult and frightful. The Queen had been neither courageous nor discreet. The King's ministers were no longer ignorant of the character I had wished her to play, and carefully sought to gather material on which to have me thrown into the Bastille, and treated as a criminal of state.

That same week I received answers from the Empress of Russia, who without entering into details with regard to the negotiation begun, spoke of them as of matter of which she no longer thought; she made me the most brilliant offers to enter her service; I wrote to the Queen, and asked her to hear me at Mme. de Guéménée's and in her presence. She came there the same evening. I did not conceal from her that in France I could be arrested at any moment, and that in Russia I was offered the highest position to which a subject might aspire; she repeated several times:

"The Empress of Russia is very fortunate and I am very unfortunate"; she then added: — "Monsieur de Lauzun, we are about to lose you, I have long since predicted it."

"Madame," I replied, "as I have had the honour of telling Your Majesty several times, as long as I shall retain the good opinion of the esteem with which she honours me, nothing will frighten me and I fear nothing. I shall not leave France like a criminal, I shall not leave the King's service without his permission, and he will not condemn without hearing me. Let me be attacked, my papers are in safety, and my correspondence with his ministers will justify me. I shall then be free to carry my services to the powers which do not disdain them."

"You shall not be attacked, monsieur de Lauzun, they will not dare do so: people know that they would be attacking me and I am very glad they know it, but what will you answer Russia?"

"I shall accept the Empress' offers, madame, on condition of responding to her orders only when

able to leave France in a proper manner, in six months for instance."

"Give me a year, that period will suffice; I hope to find means of keeping you; there is one already of attaching you to me personally, do not refuse it. M. de Tessé is about to give up his place, and I might be able to arrange matters that might be agreeable to him; will you not be my equerry?"

"Though deeply affected by so much graciousness, I feel all its value without being able to take advantage of it. How much would such a choice seem to justify the insolent reports already circulated, and let not your Majesty take offence that I should dare repeat that I never wish to receive bounties, the certain outcome of which would first cause my disinterestedness to be suspected, and then cause me to be accused of ingratitude. I shall wait a year, since the Queen wishes it, but without being deceived with regard to the impossibility of remaining in the service of France. This period will besides perhaps be sufficient so that Your Majesty may see me go away, without being vexed."

Tears flowed from the Queen's eyes.

"You treat me very cruelly, monsieur de Lauzun," said she to me, and turning towards Mme. de Guéménée:

"Princess, join with me in entreating your friend not to abandon us; and if I had a son," she continued blushing, "could I be happy to see him brought up by another than you!"

"To serve him, madame, as faithfully as you, would be all I could do: I do not feel in me the talents necessary to educate a great King."

"There are few men like you, and I should certainly not wish him in better hands; the princess, I am certain, will agree with me."

"I should be suspicious, madame! Your Majesty knows that nothing in the world is more dear to me than M. de Lauzun, and I consider him fit for anything, but it seems to me as difficult as it does to him to refuse the brilliant position offered him, to remain in a country where people so little appreciate his value."

The conversation lasted some little time longer, then the Queen whispered to Mme. de Guéménée,

who approached me and said laughingly and in low tones:

" Do you specially prize a white heron's feather which was on your hat when you took leave? The Queen is dying to have it, will you refuse her? "

I replied that I dared not offer it but that I should be very glad to have her accept it at the hands of Mme. de Guéménée.

I sent a messenger to Paris for it, and Mme. de Guéménée gave it to her the following evening. The Queen wore it the next day and when I appeared at her dinner she asked me how I liked her head-dress; I replied: " Very much."

" Never," said she, with infinite graciousness, " have I been so well adorned; it seems to me that I possess inestimable treasures."

She assuredly would have done better not to speak, for the duc de Coigny noticed from whence came the feather. She explained, with some embarrassment, that I had brought it to Mme. de Guéménée, from my voyages, and that the latter had given it to her. The duc de Coigny spoke of it that evening to Mme. de Guéménée with much displeasure, told her that nothing could be

more ridiculous and indelicate than my relations with the Queen, that it was unheard of to thus publicly make me her lover and unbelievable that she should favour such conduct. He was rather ill received and thought of a means of having me sent away.

My project, and it was the wisest, was to spend the greater part of the Winter in Italy, but the Queen would never consent to this; and to absent myself at least a few days from Court, towards the end of the Fontainebleau season, I made a trip to Chanteloup, where I found everybody extremely solicitous of my favour. Mme. la duchesse de Grammont specially, founded the greatest expectation on my credit with the Queen. It was not long before she mentioned it to me and told me that the fancy which the Queen had for me made nothing difficult of accomplishing. I replied that the Queen treated me with distinction, truly, but that as I claimed no credit, and being resolved never to ask for anything, I was unable to judge how far it could go. Mme. de Grammont answered that she did not wish to urge me to confide my secret to her, but that no one

doubted the Queen's fancy for me had had the natural results it was to have, and that I was her lover; and that consequently she would not insult me by thinking that I should not do all in my power to have the duc de Choiseul recalled to the head of the ministry. I assured Mme. de Grammont, that she was in great error as to my *liaison* with the Queen; that I was in no position to intrigue, nor to give her advice; and should I have the influence with which I was credited but which I did not possess, I was too attached to her to lead her into meddling with the King's minister's; that everyone already knew how devoted I was to M. le duc de Choiseul; and that, even though it were in my power, I would consider it doing him an ill service in placing him at that time at the head of affairs. "And why?" asked Mme. de Grammont with great earnestness.

"It is," I replied, "because M. de Choiseul would have everything to lose now by accepting such a post. The aim of the most ambitious can only be to acquire a great reputation, high consideration and a vast future, and it appears to me

that M. de Choiseul has acquired these three objects. There is in Europe no minister who enjoys so great a reputation or consideration. He is perhaps the only one who has seen the prince who banished him, abandoned on his account even by his courtiers. In returning to the ministry he would very probably be held responsible for the disastrous years brought on by his predecessors."

M. de duc and Mme. la duchesse Choiseul agreed with me; but Mme. de Grammont continued to repeat with warmth that all those who loved M. de Choiseul should wish to see him once more governing a great kingdom, and in every way increase his fortune. I did not allow myself to be persuaded; in spite of his attachment to the Queen, I could not conceal from myself all the dangers that M. de Choiseul would have for her, subjugated as he was by a woman as ambitious and imperious as was his sister. I continued to be very well treated at Chanteloup, where I remained a few days more; but Mme. de Grammont vowed me eternal hatred.

I returned to Paris, and nothing astonished me

more than to find at my door a note from Lady Harland who informed me that she was in Paris and that she would be delighted to see me. Lord Harland, lately arrived from London, had come to spend a few weeks in France to see his son who was at school in the capital. My conduct towards Marianne was so circumspect that the poor lady again recovered all confidence in me and allowed us many opportunities to speak together.

Marianne, as much of a coquette, as droll as ever, admitted that during my absence she had hardly thought of me, and that she had been more busy looking for a husband to her taste than a lover; but, in truth, she could not tell me how glad she was to see me again, and how much I gained in being compared to all those who had sought to please her.

Mlle. Harland, who could not bear the life in England and whose surroundings were disagreeable to her, obtained from her father permission to spend a few years in a convent, in Paris, and she selected the Assumption. As soon as she was established there, her parents went away and this

time Marianne separated from me with the most sincere grief.

I had always liked Fanny Harland very much, and she had always shown me much admiration and interest; I was much engrossed in her. I saw her often, and the unhappy Fanny, whose mind was lively, whose heart was sensitive, who had begun by taking a fancy to me, acquired so deep an affection, that I was as embarrassed as I was deeply affected by it. Pretty, amiable as Fanny was, I would have satisfied without resisting them, the desires which anyone but her might have inspired in me; but, upright enough not to have wished to win Marianne, would I have been excusable in ruining Fanny, who loved me much more sincerely. I therefore made up my mind to call less frequently, and I saw that it was necessary to discontinue my visits altogether. Fanny wrote to me, complained without reproaching me, contented herself with informing me that in doing an honest action, I made her extremely unhappy, and then kept the profoundest silence.

CHAPTER VII

CHAPTER VII

(1776–1777)

The Queen, for some time past, showed much friendliness towards the comtesse Jules de Polignac. A pretty face, a gentle and natural air daily increased her favour. It was to her that M. le duc de Coigny applied to form a party against me. Mme. de Grammont joined it with eagerness, and established in that circle, as her representative, the baron de Besenval, formerly attached to M. le duc de Choiseul, and very well received by the Queen. The baron tried to banter me; but bad tone and a lack of propriety are a great disadvantage at Court. The comtesse Jules undertook the same thing, but with much gallantry, consideration and never with anger. I discouraged her quickly enough.

My favour continued the same. The Queen gave me all her confidence, and hardly ever per-

mitted me to leave Versailles. My manners were very circumspect; it was with extreme reserve that I lent myself to the preferences that could be noticed. The Queen, on the contrary, seemed to make a display of the favours with which she honoured me and the influence I had over her. Talk was resumed, and it was said loudly at Court that I was or would soon be her lover.

Mme. de Guéménée, who saw us continually together, was more convinced of it than anyone else, and her extreme bias for me made her consider it a piece of good fortune for the Queen to give herself up to a man whose attachment and disinterestedness would lead her only to things worthy of her. The Queen truly showed for Mme. de Guéménée the most tender friendship and a boundless confidence; she seemed at every moment as if about to confide something to her and then would stop with embarrassment; she spoke of me to her incessantly with an interest and pleasure she did not seek to conceal. Many people asked me to use my influence with her in their favour. I received them very politely, and assured them that I had no credit, and did not

pretend to protect anyone. M. le comte d' Artois, the infallible thermometer of the Queen's favour, was not content with treating me with the greatest distinction; he had for me, one might say, a sort of respect, could not get along without me and was so persistent in his pursuit, that it was very annoying and often unbearable.

The Queen was fond of high gaming, and knew that this was not pleasant to the King. This compelled her to conceal what she played, and to choose among a very small number those on whose discretion she counted. I told her that this was very bad, and gave occasion for most disagreeable talk about her. I besought her to play in the cabinets of Versailles a game that she might play with everyone, adding that, at Mme. de Guéménée's, she might play what she liked. This advice, and that of thinking more of the King, are the only two I ever gave her. She received them with that grace and that tender preference which accompanied every one of her actions towards me.

As I did not wish to appear to be paying court solely to her, I often hunted with the King, a

thing which bored me mortally, and she knew it very well. So that she never failed to hunt on horseback on those days, or to try and meet the hunting party in her carriage. The King always sent me to her, and told me to stay there. He appeared to approve of her manners towards me, and there was the more merit in this, as the talk with regard to us had reached him. On that occasion he had not been satisfied with receiving those who had dared to repeat the matter to him badly, but had at once begun to treat me infinitely better, and to be as polite towards me as his character would allow. He learned one day, during the Winter, that M. le comte d'Artois had gone out alone on horseback very early in the morning; this caused him great anxiety as he feared he might have some quarrel. He was told that I was with him; he greatly astonished all those who were about him, by saying very calmly:

"If M. de Lauzun is with him, I have no anxiety; nothing untoward will befall him, and he would have warned the Queen, had he foreseen something he could not prevent."

Such was my position at the beginning of 1776.

The reader will later see the intrigues and annoyances of all sorts which followed my favour, and accompanied it about a year before crushing it utterly.

At the end of 1775, I met at the play Lady Barrymore, one of my oldest acquaintances in England, but whom chance had caused me to meet but seldom during my various visits there. She was pretty, full of wit and grace: I knew she had the reputation of being quick tempered; I fancied her and she could not be dangerous for me. I called on her several times. The vicomte de Pons was there all the time, affected claims with regard to her which appeared to be not without foundation. I have never cared to poach on anyone's preserves, and I was about to withdraw, when M. de Saint-Blanchard, my cousin, told me that Lady Barrymore was a charming woman; that M. de Pons should not be permitted to make a show of her without reason, and that I should assure myself of his rights or have him dismissed.

This was not much according to my character. However, as I liked her, and as, far from having

any ill effects, the publicity of this love affair might have its advantage, I determined to ask Lady Barrymore on what terms she was with the vicomte de Pons. She vowed to me that there was nothing between them. I offered myself. "And the Queen?" she said, laughing; I told her how all that she might have in mind in that respect was absurd and ill founded.

"Listen," she said to me; "I am prettier than the Queen, and still too young to serve as a pretext to anyone."

I had quite some difficulty in persuading her that I had never thought of making her play such a part; she finally believed me, applied her lips to mine to prove it, and did not postpone my happiness; the next day she signified to M. de Pons that he might continue to call as a friend; but that her affection for me would not permit her to bear that he should appear with any other pretentions; and in less than twenty-four hours I had a mistress in a more authentic manner than I had ever happened to have.

This had a mediocre success at Versailles. Mme. de Guéménée was in despair to see me with

another attachment, and wanted to persuade me that the Queen was much grieved. The Queen, in truth, spoke ill of Lady Barrymore and did not treat her well when she met her, and without caring much for me she has always done me the honour of taking a dislike to all the women to whom she believed me attached. My favour nevertheless was greater than ever, and I went to Versailles regularly, the Queen and M. le comte d'Artois being unable to do anything without me. The intrigues began then, the following was the first:

I had gone to the ball with Lady Barrymore, who did not miss a single one. I did not know that the Queen was there. I met her, she took my arm, whispered to me a long time, and this was noticed. A few days after being kept in my room with a bad cold, M. d'Esterhazy came to see me and said that he was too much of a friend not to warn me that the Queen was displeased at my conduct; that my attentions toward her were too assiduous; that I seemed to follow her and to be in love with her; that recently, at the Opera ball, it had been noticed how attentive I was to her, and that this had embarrassed her. I asked M.

d'Esterhazy what led him to believe all this. He replied that Mme. de Lamballe, to whom the Queen had mentioned it, had spoken to him about the matter. He earnestly begged me to keep his words secret.

"I cannot promise you that," I replied; "the Queen owes it to my attachment for her not to have me notified by a third party, when I have been so unfortunate as to displease her."

M. d'Esterhazy appeared quite disconcerted and very much frightened on seeing me resolved to write to the Queen; he did not dare to insist further and went out.

I at once wrote to the Queen, and gave her an account of our conversation. She treated M. d'Esterhazy very ill, sent me word that she had bluntly requested him not to put words in her mouth that she had never uttered, and that I must have seen that all that he had reported had not a vestige of common sense.

A grand ball at the Palais-Royal, which Mme. la duchesse de Chartres gave to the Queen, was, I believe, the occasion of the first act of infidelity which Lady Barrymore committed towards me and

which was followed by many others. From the Palais-Royal ball the guests strolled to that of the Opera. Lady Barrymore went to M. le duc de Chartres' box with M. le comte d'Artois, and God knows what occurred there. M. le duc de Chartres, who knew on what terms I was with Lady Barrymore, told me about it the next day. I spoke to her; she told me with an appearance of truth that it was true that she had gone upstairs with M. le comte d'Artois to get a better view of the ball; that it might be considered indiscreet, not very proper, but that nothing wrong had occurred and that she had come down a few minutes after. I am not naturally suspicious; I was not jealous; I believed her. I daily discovered in her more wit and grace, and she was capable of order, application and serious reasoning.

I became attached to her, I almost fell in love with her; but her frivolity, her quick temper, her absolute lack of principle, stopped me. Yet I was not displeased with her conduct, when one of M. le comte d'Artois' servants, who had long been mine, and was most attached to me, thought to render me a service and prevent annoyances, by

informing me that M. le comte d'Artois, as well as I, had Lady Barrymore, and gave me proof of what he said. Shocked at her faithlessness, I attempted to reproach her; she listened to me with an assurance which confounded me.

"I admit it," she said, "and in truth should have told you had I not feared your warmth and quickness; I have never had the intention of deceiving you."

I wanted to end all intimacy with her. "Lauzun," she said to me, "you do wrong in leaving me. You please me, you suit me, I like you very much, but my freedom is dearer to me than you. I shall not sacrifice it to you; I shall not bear that my lover should be a jealous husband, annoying, imperious and particular as to my fidelity; I care little for M. le comte d'Artois; I could give him up without difficulty, but I do not wish to make sacrifices, I declare to you. I shall keep him without making much of him, and I am far from having for him the sentiments with which you have inspired me. See," she added, pointing at a wallet on the table, "there are all his letters, take them, keep them, do whatever you please with

them; I swear to you that I shall never make the same use of yours."

I was astonished and did not answer. She continued: "Let us not quarrel, Lauzun, over so small a matter; the attentions of the comte d'Artois amuse me, flatter perhaps my conceit and my vanity. How can I help it? He is a youth, a toy that I do not wish taken from me. But that will not hinder from your always finding in me the tenderest unconstraint, the sincerest interest. My taste leans towards you. I promise that you shall never be importuned by my little fellow . . . that he shall not have one single moment of those which I have so much pleasure in giving you. I have never taken in anyone an interest so real, so lively as I have in you. I do not wish to be your slave. I should be very sorry to no longer be your mistress."

Thus speaking, Lady Barrymore, carelessly lying on a divan, as pretty as the day, partly disrobed, awoke desires in me, and saw it plainly; her arms wound about my neck drew me towards her, and I was soon intoxicated with pleasure.

The reader may readily imagine that we made up.

As to M. le comte d'Artois, she kept her word; I never met him. Her conduct was what she had said it would be: she was not exacting; and every moment I did not spend at Versailles, she desired that I should give to her, with an infinite grace, and I went to her house every evening. The appointments she had with M. le comte d'Artois did not disturb me. During one of the hardest winters I have ever experienced in France, she amused herself in making him wait four or five hours in his cabriolet, in the middle of the Place Louis XV, and I did not leave her house one moment sooner. I usually did not know it; and when I seemed to suspect it, she did all in her power to make me remain longer: on that account poor Artois coughed in a frightful manner. He was well aware to whom he was under obligations for this, but he never imagined that I was in the secret.

In the beginning of 1776, M. de Saint-Germain [27] resolved to reduce all the legions at a time when people thought that he was going to in-

crease their number stupendously. The Queen knew of it before it became public, and came to Mme. de Guéménée, much embarrassed as to how she would announce it to me. I saw very well that something tormented her; but did not know what it was. The duc d'Harcourt entered.

"I congratulate you," said he to me in the course of the conversation; "for it appears that M. de Saint-Germain is greatly increasing the legions, and raises them to two thousand men."

The Queen uttered an exclamation and left the room. Mme. de Guéménée, in a fright, followed her.

"I am in despair," said the Queen; "do you hear what is being said of the legions? Well, they are reduced. Your friend will be furious, and nothing will prevent him from leaving us."

"He is, truly, much attached to his legion," said Mme. de Guéménée; "but if something can keep him, it is the interest which Your Majesty deigns to take in him, and to learn it from your own lips."

She called me:

"How unhappy I am," said the Queen; "the legions are discharged."

"This event, madame," I replied, "will give me back my freedom. I trust that the Queen will not permit that the old and brave officers of the royal legion should be ill treated."

She interrupted me:

"They will have excellent pensions. I have attended to the matter. And you, what will you do?"

"I, madame? If I serve, it will not be in France."

"So," said she, "it will be due to M. de Saint-Germain that we shall lose the man on whom we most depended."

I saw tears in her eyes. I was moved by them.

"No," I said to her, "my heart shall never depend on events. You will once more dispose of my fate. It is no longer the King whom I serve, it is the Queen; let her judge if I have a desire to leave her service."

She held out her hand without answering. I kissed it several times fervently. She said to Mme. de Guéménée as she looked at me:

" I entered here very unhappy and I leave very happy."

She went away.

M. de Saint-Germain called for his orders, and told her that he had never had the intention of depriving me of the means of serving with distinction, in discharging the royal legion; that he desired, on the contrary, that I should gain by the change, and that he would propose to the King to give me a corps of 1,200 mounted chasseurs. He sent to M. le baron de Wimpffen, in whom he had great confidence, the order to give me his solemn promise in the matter, assuring me that I should retain all the royal legion under another name and considerably increased. I had no cause for complaint, and the Queen was satisfied.

At the end of about two weeks, M. de Saint-Germain sent baron de Wimpffen to inform me that the corps of 1,200 mounted chasseurs which he had intended to organise being an impossibility, he had made an arrangement so that M. de Schomberg would surrender to me the ownership of his foreign regiment of dragoons. This arrangement had been made to the extent that no

mention of it even had been made to M. de Schomberg, who, as a matter of course, flatly refused at the very first suggestion.

M. de Saint-Germain was the first to announce it to the Queen, expressing the desire to treat me well. He said that the whole affair could be arranged satisfactorily; that he was quite certain that M. de Chamboran would part with his regiment of hussars with pleasure; that, whatever conditions he asked would be granted him, and his regiment given to me. M. de Saint-Germain advised me to personally carry to M. de Chamboran at Sarreguemines very advantageous propositions, and try to return with his resignation; which, he said, would be a very easy matter. This delighted the Queen; she liked the hussars, and the thing which would please her most was to see me have a Hungarian regiment.

I went to Sarreguemines with the greatest dispatch. Far from accepting conditions much above his expectations, M. de Chamboran took offence at them, and replied to M. de Saint-Germain by a letter full of maxims and nonsense, in which he de-

clared that he would never part with his regiment.

At Versailles the lack of success of my negotiation was not expected. The Queen, always charming, full of graciousness, gave me on my arrival a superb sword and was in despair, when she learned that I did not have Chamboran's regiment. She then wanted to ask the King to allow the Emperor to present her with a noble Hungarian guard, whose command she intended for me. I explained to her that however flattering the favour, I should be obliged to refuse it, because it had as many inconveniences as a post in her household. I did not speak again of my military fortune, and some months passed without the subject coming up again.

The trouble of comte de Guines attracted general attention, and this is how it ended, and the share I had in it. Mme. de Guéménée gave, during the carnival season, every Saturday, a ball in honour of the Queen. There was dancing in two of the halls, and gaming in the others.

It was at the time when awful verses and songs had been composed against the Queen. For-

tunately I had not yet been named in them; but the talk concerning my favour daily became more disquieting, and I could not doubt that my enemies hoped to turn it to account to ruin me. I was playing *quinze* with M. le comte d'Artois, M. le duc de Chartres and two other persons. Mme. de Guéménée entered the room, with the air of a person who has just heard of a great misfortune; she approached me and said:

"Leave the game at once; I have something important and pressing to tell you."

I was convinced that an order for my arrest had been issued, and that I was about to be cast into the Bastille. I arose and followed her. She told me that the comte de Guines had been recalled from his embassy in England in the most humiliating manner; that he was accused with having acted contrary to his instructions, and with having greatly compromised the Court of France with regard to the *pacte de famille*.

It seemed to me impossible that comte de Guines should have been guilty of such great blunders, and I resolved to serve him once more without expecting any more gratitude from him than

he had shown heretofore. The Queen and the duc de Coigny came in; and it was decided that she would abandon comte de Guines, and would in no way meddle with his affair. I made bold to oppose her attitude with force, and to say that the Queen should not so readily abandon a man in whom she had shown so marked an interest. The duc de Coigny stoutly insisted that the Queen should not meddle in the matter and I made bold to reply still more stoutly. I said that I assuredly was not of the opinion that the Queen should ask mercy for the comte de Guines, but that I believed that the Queen should obtain that he be allowed to be heard before being judged; I added that, without this favour, it would be impossible for the Queen's faithful servants to count on her bounties and interests; and that I could judge by myself of the effect all this would have on all the others.

"This is sufficient," said the Queen. "I am resolved and convinced. I shall follow M. de Lauzun's advice. Yes," she repeated in a charming manner, "I shall willingly do what you consider proper in this affair." She returned to the ballroom. Mme. de Guéménée had come to my

way of thinking from the very beginning of the conversation; but the duc de Coigny left the room mortally offended.

The comte de Guines returned from London; he was heard and vindicated of the last charge. The Queen obtained from the King that he would write that he was satisfied with his conduct, and would give him the *brevet* of duke. She sent for him for the first time (for she had not seen him in her apartments until then), about nine o'clock in the morning, to announce to him so good a piece of news, and hand him the King's *brevet;* she said to him:

"Take all this, without loss of time, to M. de Lauzun, for to him more than to anyone else you owe the successful outcome of this affair. Request him at the same time to come to me at once."

I had been gaming a part of the night, and I was still in my bed. M. de Guines caused me to be awakened, and expressed the greatest gratitude. I dressed quickly and went up to the Queen's apartments.

"Well, are you satisfied?" said she to me. "Have I not followed your advice well?"

" Can I be otherwise than delighted to see you just and gracious! "

" Will you always make use of me for others," she continued, " and shall I never be permitted to do something for you? "

" No, madame; you know my profession of faith; and I prize it more than ever."

" Proud, strange, extraordinary creature! This makes me lose my patience, and grieves me more." And she left the room.

The beginning of Spring brought back the races; I had many horses entered, on which the Queen always wagered, although it was not looked upon with pleasure by her circle. During the first days of April, I had a horse run against one of those of M. le duc de Chartres, for a very considerable sum, too high a sum no doubt. The Queen was much interested, came to the race, and a moment before the starting of the horses said to me:

" I am so afraid, that if you lose, I believe I shall cry."

This was noticed and condemned. My horse won quite easily, and the public who preferred me to M. le duc de Chartres applauded me long and

loud. The Queen appeared transported with delight. I had the greatest difficulty in preventing her from having race horses,* and from riding in the English fashion. This was, I believe, the greatest proof of my influence over her.

A few days after, at a hunt in the Bois de Boulogne, the Queen noticed a very beautiful horse driven by an English huntsman following me; she often spoke to the man and she asked him if the animal was quiet and if it would be good for a woman. The huntsman replied that he knew of no better nor more beautiful. The Queen told me she wanted it. I told her in a whisper and jestingly, that I did not wish to give it to her; she called my huntsman, told him to change for one of hers and turning to me:

"Since you do not wish to give it, I take it."

The duc de Coigny approached in time to hear the last words, which scandalised him prodigiously (this is his own expression).

It seemed impossible for my favour to increase,

* The race took place April 15, 1776. The Queen had become an enthusiast on horse racing and wanted horses of her own; the King refused. Lauzun's colours were a black jacket trimmed with green.

and in fact it was not far from decreasing. The King himself was beginning to treat me very kindly when M. de Saint-Germain, after having successively failed in all his promises to me, finally offered me the command of the royal regiment of dragoons, which had the reputation of being the most insubordinate and the worst then in service. I refused it coldly and without anger.

The King sent for me at Marly, again spoke to me with a kindness, and an interest to which it was impossible for me to be insensible; he demanded of me to take the command of the royal regiment of dragoons,[28] promised to give me the first foreign foot or mounted regiment that might happen to have a vacancy or to be organised, and said on going out to M. de Saint-Germain: "All is arranged; Lauzun will take the royal regiment."

M. de Saint-Germain promised to allow me to choose my garrisons, and to do all that I deemed proper, and added that, although the price of this regiment was 40,000 *écus,* the King would give it to me for nothing.

At the end of the same week the Queen learned while at Marly that Mme. de Lamballe, still her

intimate friend, was ill with the measles at Plombières. She was in the greatest grief at the news and thought that the dangerous condition of her friend was being concealed from her. Nothing could reassure her. I offered to go to Plombières before joining my regiment, and to send her the most accurate reports. She accepted with gratitude, spent the following day in writing and in giving me a large packet in which she told me she said much about me. I departed at once, and reached Plombières, where I found Mme. la duchesse de Grammont, who, not doubting that I had more credit than ever, made me all sorts of advances, and did all in her power to discover if my voyage had not some secret cause.

Mme. de Lamballe, who was in good health, wrote in person to the Queen, to whom I sent the letter by a messenger, and I left for Sarreguemines, where I was to witness the discharge of the royal legion, before joining my regiment. I was unable to leave such good men, on whose attachment I counted so much, without the greatest difficulty. Our separation was truly touching.

I betook myself to Sarre-Louis, where my regi-

ment was garrisoned, and I was much astonished, on arriving, to learn that M. le comte de Saint-Germain, so as to more strongly keep up his conduct towards me, made me pay 40,000 *écus* for the regiment he had given me for nothing. The royal regiment, neglected for thirty years by all its commanders and to whom all subordination was unknown, saw my arrival with extreme fear; but we were soon on very good terms; I have never seen a corps with greater good-will nor more willing to serve well.

I cannot pass in silence a rather amusing adventure which happened to me while I was garrisoned at Sarre-Louis. There is at half a league from the city a chapter of canonesses called Loutre. The abbess was a woman of quality from Germany, and her chapter was generally well composed. There were to be found there a few young and pretty persons. Among them was conspicuous a tall and beautiful Mlle. de Surin, whom the greatest appearance of innocence rendered charming. There was no society at Sarre-Louis. I often went to the chapter, and Mlle. de Surin daily increased in my esteem. She showed great preference for

me, which in others I should have considered as setting their caps for me; her knee at the table often encountered mine. She stepped on my toes at every moment, and, as soon as we were alone a few instants, embraced me with the greatest friendship. I had a great mind to take advantage of it. I was stopped by the manner in which the abbess, Mme. de Wartensleben, continually spoke of the innocence of Mlle. de Surin and of the purity of her heart. It seemed that it would be a horrible thing for me to take advantage of the inexperience of a young girl of quality, and to risk ruining her. I therefore continued to be as circumspect; I surrendered without scruples to the allurements of a certain little Mme. Dupresle, married at Luxembourg, who was homely, but amiable and gay. I learned in the month of October, on leaving Sarre-Louis, that five or six officers of my regiment had been intimate with the innocent Mlle. de Surin, and that she had not feared to leave evidence of this in their hands by very clear letters.

At Sarre-Louis I received a messenger from Mme. de Guéménée, who wrote to me on behalf of the Queen, and informed me that Mme. la com-

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tesse Jules de Polignac had asked the Queen for the reversion of the command of M. de Tessé and the adjunction to his post of first equerry to the Queen for her husband; that, although this arrangement was possible only on conditions which would certainly not be satisfactory to me, the Queen, who considered herself as pledged towards me, did not wish to close this affair without my consent, and without knowing if it would not displease me.

I replied as was proper to the Queen and to Mme. de Guéménée, that I had never had the slightest pretension to that post, and that I was delighted that she should be able to dispose of it in favour of her friend; I did all I could so that my letter might express exactly and pleasantly that the arrangement contemplated by the Queen was in no way displeasing to me.

I returned to Paris at the beginning of October. The next day I went to Choisy, where the King was; the Queen received me very pleasantly, exhibited much joy at seeing me again and spoke to me in a whisper a long time. I left the room; and when I returned, I was able to hear the duc de

Coigny saying to the Queen, seated near the door:

"You have not kept your word; you had promised not to speak much to him and to treat him as you do everyone else."

I had no difficulty in guessing that he spoke of me. A few moments after the Queen came to speak to me, and I said to her:

"Take care, you will get yourself scolded once again." She was embarrassed, and ended by admitting it and jesting with me about the matter.

The appearance of an approaching war caused a thought of making preparations in India. A report had been asked of M. de Bussy, who had lived there a long time. This tempted me. I had the subject mentioned to him by M. de Voyer, who had been most friendly with me for the past ten years, and M. de Bussy was kind enough to accept me as an assistant. I spoke of it to the Queen, who opposed it vigorously. She showed the liveliest grief, told me that she would never give her consent; flatly refusing to speak of the subject to the King. I had no other expedient, for I had never seen M. de Maurepas, whom the Queen did not

like and on whom she had never permitted me to call.

During the Fontainebleau voyage, I enjoyed the most ridiculous favour one can imagine; for the Queen showed me more graciousness than ever before (I was in mortal fear of her circle, which detested me); she appeared solely interested in me when not observed; and when people looked at her, she often dared not say a word to me and jestingly admitted it. I urged her to let me go to India; that was the way to arrange everything: she continued to refuse with the same stubbornness. Her circle thought my credit much diminished, and applauded accordingly.

There occurred in the month of November a famous race between M. le comte d'Artois' horse and that of M. le duc de Chartres. The Queen bet against M. le duc de Chartres, and I, against M. le comte d'Artois. He lost, and, on leaving the race course, the Queen said to me: "Oh, monster, you were sure of winning." The remark was heard. This familiar way of addressing me alarmed certain people: they feared they had made a mistake; intrigues redoubled. The Queen's cir-

cle and that of the duc de Choiseul, which joined with the former in a subaltern manner, believed themselves ruined if they did not ruin me.

I then had important debts, and, in spite of what has been said in the matter, this was not extraordinary: Mme. de Lauzun had brought me only 150,000 *livres* income. I wished her to live in splendour. We both expected a very large fortune, and the future could cause us no anxiety. My affairs had been ill managed during my minority; ridiculous investments had been made for me, on which I had lost enormously. Much carelessness, much more inclination for spending than saving, since the ten or twelve years I had been in society, had disturbed my affairs. I owed about 1,500,000 *livres* out of a fortune of more than four millions. My creditors did not press me and willingly consented to wait for the time when I should be able to pay them without inconvenience. I had seen them all on my return from Fontainebleau, hoping at that time to go to India.

They had all been satisfied with the arrangements I had proposed; and I was as much at ease as if I had had no debts, when some officious persons

purchased from my creditors the majority of my debts. They were so anxious to acquire such claims, that for some of these they gave ten per cent more than their value. Advice of all this was sent in care of the porter at Mme. la maréchale de Luxembourg's, where I had never resided, and where people were perfectly aware I did not reside. A draft for 100,000 *livres,* payable in a week, was also sent there.

When all this had been sufficiently well arranged, Mme. la maréchale de Luxembourg sent for me, tried to frighten me, and told me that I had nothing more left in the world. I answered that that was not true; she was embarrassed to see that I knew more about my affairs than she had supposed. I was told, to frighten me, that my family could have me interdicted or perhaps even locked up. I very respectfully assured Mme. la maréchale that I feared neither one nor the other; she told me that the furniture of Mme. de Lauzun would be seized for the 100,000 *livres* that had to be paid in a week, and that the only resource left to me was to abandon my entire fortune and person to my family, who would be willing to dispose of both.

I refused. I assured Mme. la maréchale that the 100,000 *livres* would be paid and that her granddaughter's furniture would not be seized. I went out leaving her much displeased with me.

As to Mme. de Lauzun, she was in a plight that almost made me laugh two or three times, although I hardly felt like it. She would have liked to appear very reasonable and very generous, if it could have cost her nothing. This interfered with all the fine and touching things she wanted to say; she therefore decided to keep silent.

I went to my father, I told him what had just taken place, and requested him not to meddle in the matter, asking him only to let me know if it were proposed that I be locked up or interdicted; this course, which did not compromise him, and was to cost him nothing, pleased him very much.

On leaving him, I went to my 100,000 *livres* man, and severely reproached him for his ill behaviour. He admitted it and told me that for this note payable in a week had been paid him so high a price that he had been unable to refuse so advantageous a deal. I did not conceal how disagreeable his proceeding had been to me. He will-

ingly offered to make amends for the harm he had done. He proposed, very politely, to lend me 100,000 *livres* on my own terms to withdraw this important note, which was arranged at once.

The next day I busied myself calling all my old creditors together, and I found them willing to do everything I wished. The only ones I found obdurate were the recent ones who had bought up my notes. Their number was not very large and I fortunately found enough money to pay them. My project was to sell my lands as soon as possible, pay my debts, travel with much economy and invest my money in a life annuity on me or on Mme. de Lauzun, so as not to be obliged to decrease her expenses in any way.

M. de Voyer came to see me and said with his usual simplicity:

"You have been reported hopelessly ruined; I find it hard to believe; but it may be so, and this is what I have to propose to you. I have an estate called la Guerche, four hours from Ormes; the house is very habitable and sufficiently well furnished. I offer you the land and the income for as long a time as you may wish; I can do it without

inconvenience. Should you prefer the value of the land in cash, I am offered a million for it; I shall give it to you and you may dispose of it; I do not care to know any details. I perhaps know no more about business than you do."

I was much affected by M. de Voyer's offer. I refused it, having no need of it, and assured him that were it necessary I should rather apply to him than to any of my relatives. The sacrifice was not great; for not one of them asked if he could be of any service to me. I was afraid that the King might become seriously prejudiced against me should he be informed of my troubles by my enemies; I resolved to write to him and sent him a statement of my fortune and of my debts.

I went to Versailles and requested the Queen to give my letter to the King. She received me with a constrained and embarrassed air, told me that Mme. de Lauzun was much to be pitied and that her conduct was very noble and very reasonable. I replied that I assuredly did not doubt that Mme. de Lauzun would show nobility and reasonableness on all necessary occasions; but that I should never

put her to the test for money. The Queen asked me, blushing, what might be done for me, and offered me her protection, in too queenly a fashion to suit the occasion. This impelled me to close the conversation at once. I begged her pardon for having importuned her with the details of my private affairs. I left her in a state of embarrassment for which I was almost sorry.

I went up to M. de Maurepas' room; I had never spoken to him. I explained my position in a few words, and requested him to give my letter to the King. He answered me with much graciousness:

"There is no time to lose; I am going to the King at once; wait for me."

He returned in a quarter of an hour, and said that the King appreciated my confidence and had ordered him to assure me that I might count on his protection and interest, of which he soon would give me proof. M. de Maurepas assured me that, as a part of my fortune had been used in the King's service, His Majesty had the intention of giving me a large sum of money and a large pension. I

told him that I declined both; that I had no need of them, and that what I had left was more than sufficient to my ambition.

I returned to Paris. I heard that M. de Guines had given me, though I did not deserve it, all the blame that could render Mme. de Lauzun interesting. I took the liberty of making jest of him. He called at my house; he wrote to me, and I treated all his steps with the contempt they merited.

It was with much greater sorrow that I heard that M. de Choiseul, to whose interest my faithful attachment gave me some rights, spoke of me in the most shocking manner. As to Mme. la duchesse de Grammont, she said with moderation that I was a liar and a rascal. I therefore considered myself useless in the society of M. le duc de Choiseul and of madame, his sister, and I gave it up absolutely. I regretted this very much on account of Mme. la duchesse de Choiseul, whom I loved tenderly and for whose conduct I had nothing but praise; but as I did not see M. le duc de Choiseul, I could not call on madame. M. le duc de Choiseul and Mme. de Grammont said

that I was an ingrate. M. de Choiseul had never done anything for me; I had given him the greatest evidence of my attachment. He had squandered the fortune of Mme. de Choiseul which I was to inherit; he turned against me at a time when I was unfortunate. The case was not difficult to decide.

It was stated that I had dissipated the entire fortune of Mme. de Lauzun and sold her diamonds, that I had made notes and pledges on the life of my father, on that of M. le maréchal de Biron, on that of Mme. de Choiseul and that of Mme. de Luxembourg. It was important that I should demonstrate the falsity of all those imputations. That was not difficult.

I sold my lands to M. le prince de Guéménée, upon condition that he pay some of my creditors to whom this arrangement was satisfactory. I sold a great number of funds on the King, which were losing half their value. I ended everything in less than six weeks. I turned over her property to Mme. de Lauzun, and I very clearly proved that she had never been asked to give her signature for me since the day of our marriage. The necessary

funds to cover all the conditions included in our marriage contract being duly deposited, there remained to me 80,000 *livres* in a life annuity on M. de Guéménée, exempt funds amounting to about 500,000 francs and a rather nice house, which, in truth, was mine for life only.

I wanted to divide what I had with Mme. de Lauzun; she refused the proposition. Mme. de Luxembourg insisted that she should live with her, and did not even permit her to keep the diamonds I had given her: they were returned to me. I declined to receive them. They were deposited at a notary's.

The Queen continued to treat me graciously; it was however not difficult to see that my favour had totally fallen. People had already been careful to tell her that I had joined with M. de Maurepas to intrigue against her. It is true that this minister had acquired great friendship for me, and was beginning to show confidence in me.

Such was my position at the beginning of 1777. Nothing more hindered me, and I had not lost the desire to go to India, although M. de Maurepas wished me to give it up. I combined with M. de

Bussy. I drew up his reports, which were good, but badly written. All agreed as to the advantages of everything he proposed; but no decision was reached.

Lady Barrymore, whom I had abandoned to many admirers, had returned to England. The report of my ruin caused her to return to Paris. She sent for me.

" Listen," she said to me, " and do not interrupt me. You are said to be ruined. I am rich, young and independent. I come to propose to share your fate and offer you my fortune; I shall travel with you wherever you may wish, and for as long a time as you wish. Do not fear the frivolity of my character. Nothing promises me so much pleasure and happiness as this plan. I wish you to assume over me the authority of the strictest husband; I feel that I shall never seek to escape from it."

I embraced and thanked Lady Barrymore, whom I grieved very much by refusing. It was at this time that Mme. de Genlis and Mme. de Potocka attempted, on the debris of a Polish order, to establish in France *The Order of Perseverance*.[29] I

had given in Poland itself too many evidences of my romantic character not to be admitted without a test. The by-laws of the order were delightful. It became much in fashion, very select. People of distinction, aged and of sense, prided themselves in being admitted to it. An immense wooden tent, which was erected in the middle of my garden, became its temple.

The Queen, greedy of all novelties, was anxious to join it: some strove to keep her away and, as a matter of course, her desire increased. She wanted to send us to the King to have him recognise our order, and have him grant us permission to wear on the service uniform, even when with him, the violet scarf of our order. All society trembled at the prospect of seeing the Queen in an order of knighthood at the head of which I was; which seemed to be the greatest of dangers.

Our grand master had not been elected. Our first law said that he must be of a great house or distinguished from the others by some grand deed. Monsieur, the King's brother, was proposed to be grand master; he was rejected. Monsieur was offended. Sorry jests were made on our order; it

was turned to ridicule, and the Queen forgot it.

A young woman, Mme. de Fandoas, sister to the baronne de Crussol, who, as far as known, had had but one lover, M. de Nassau, whom she had lost, showed interest in me at our meetings. A fine skin, beautiful eyes, fine hair, more artlessness than wit rendered her then rather agreeable. We were soon on good terms; but not for long. M. de Fandoas was so jealous, she was so imprudent, that for fear of a scandal which nothing could prevent, I was obliged to break with her.

Fanny Harland, as soon as she knew me to be persecuted, ruined, wrote to me:

"Come and see me, I have a lover, give me back my friend."

I hastened to her and Fanny received me with that tender friendship which she retained for me till the end of her life. She told me that M. Edouard Dillon was much in love with her and that she loved him. I saw Fanny every day; I was sad, bored, surrounded by disagreeable objects, and the attentions of Fanny soothed my troubles and

were a great consolation to me. M. Edouard Dillon was very anxious to marry her; he was without fortune. Mlle. Harland, at all events, was to have a considerable one, and the death of her brother, aged eight or ten years, could make her one of the greatest matches in England. Marianne had great influence over Sir Robert Harland, her father, an austere man and one hard to get along with. I wrote to Marianne that she must try to bring her father and mother back to Paris, so that we might consult together as to what should be done to marry Fanny to M. Edouard Dillon. Marianne, whose heart was good and who truly loved her sister, answered that she would do all in her power and that she hoped to arrive in Paris soon with all the family. In truth, Lady Harland came to Paris two weeks after with Marianne; some business kept Sir Robert Harland in London.

The good mamma made the acquaintance of M. Edouard whom she liked also; she took him under her protection and wrote her husband in his favour. Marianne wrote to her father, who showed towards a man without a fortune,

much less repugnance than we had feared. We were unable to obtain anything from the King in favour of the marriage of M. Edouard. But M. de Maurepas promised me to give the matter his attention and to see that he received one of the first places he might be capable of filling. During that time, my conduct with Marianne was of great circumspection, and we had nothing to hide from the good mamma.

The marriage of Fanny was in a good way, when I was obliged to join my regiment quartered at Vaucouleurs, the most dismal spot in all Champagne and consequently in the universe. At the end of a month, I received a letter from Fanny, who informed me that everything was settled and that she was, within a few days, to be married at Haute-Fontaine. I went to Nancy to ask M. de Stainville, under whose orders I was, for permission to go to Haute-Fontaine for a few days. I reached there two days after the wedding of Fanny who had already had the greatest success with Mme. de Roth and Mme. Dillon. I did not find her in very good health; but she appeared to me to be happy and showed the greatest joy

at seeing me again. She was to spend the Autumn in England; she made me promise to join her there in the month of October.

Marianne was charming to me; as it was believed that we no longer thought of one another, we were allowed much liberty.

One day when we were riding in the forest of Compiègne, rather far from the rest of the party, she said to me:

"Lauzun, now that my sister is married, we can speak of ourselves. Do you know that I love you more than ever and that I believe it will be forever?"

I shall spare her for whom I continue these Memoirs the remainder of this conversation which was very long and tender. I shall content myself with saying that we promised to write to one another with the greatest regularity, and that we did not fail in our promises.

CHAPTER VIII

CHAPTER VIII

(1778–1779)

Lady Harland returned to England and I to my regiment.

I led a rather easy life there, more quiet than agreeable, and which suited me better than anyone else. M. et Mme. le comtesse de Salles, who in the Summer lived on a rather fine estate at a quarter of a league from Vaucouleurs, came there. I went, according to custom, to make them a corps visit. M. de Gony, brother of Mme. de Salles, was an honorary captain in my regiment. I was very well received. Grand dinners, balls and fêtes were given in my honour. Mme. de Salles came to return my visit on horseback, in a dragoon's uniform, with leather breeches. This was more than enough to disgust me of any woman. This, however, did not prevent me from having this one, who was neither

pretty nor amiable, and who had a fearful tone. I repented on the spot, and have not yet forgiven myself. This *liaison* became unbearable to me. I sought with eargerness for a means of breaking it.

M. de Stainville came to see my regiment, found it already trained, according to the new regulations which he himself had helped to draw up, was pleased, pressed me to come to the manœuvres of the Nancy garrison, an invitation which I accepted. I found several English women at Nancy. A certain Lady Blower, with whom M. de Liancourt (duc de la Rochefoucauld) was much in love and whom he strove to appear to have; and a little Mme. Brown, extremely pretty and very like (in a more beautiful manner), the Queen, in whom M. de Stainville was deeply interested; but unfortunately she did not speak a word of French, nor he a word of English. I was about the only man in the garrison to whom she could talk; that brought us much together, and to please her M. de Stainville seldom permitted me to leave Nancy. I loved that charming little woman; but I was good

and honest enough not to tell her, knowing all the dangers a French lover could have for her. She guessed my feelings, told me so with a candour the like of which I have rarely seen; and added that she also loved me.

My virtue could go no farther; I took advantage of her liking and sincerity; we both succumbed; but I was so prudent, I was so watchful of my conduct that no one on earth had the slightest suspicion. I did not long enjoy so sweet an intercourse. The poor little Mme. Brown caught a malignant fever from which she died, and left me filled with grief.

I returned to my regiment. Mme. de Salles was fortunately no longer on her estate. Mme. E. Dillon had left for England in very bad health; she wrote to me often. Marianne wrote me every mail without fail. She appeared to have no other pleasure. In the course of September, her letters became disquieting. She finally informed me that her sister was in the greatest danger, that the doctors were beginning to despair of her life and that I had no time to lose if I wished to see her once more. M. de Stainville

permitted me to leave at once and I reached London the first of October.

I found there a letter from Mme. E. Dillon, dated some time past, which ardently expressed the desire of seeing me before she died, and which said that she had important secrets to confide and which could be confided to me only. After her death, she said, I should receive a casket full of interesting papers, which would serve to justify her whole life. I was about to leave for Suffolk county, where Mme. Dillon was ill at her father's, when I received a letter from Lady Harland which informed me that her daughter was better, that the doctors had prescribed the waters of Bristol for her, that the entire family expected to leave at once and would take me with them on their way through London. Two days after, I had a letter from Marianne announcing the death of her sister. I received at the same time an almost illegible letter from poor Mme. Edouard, written on the eve of her death. She grieved at not having seen me and again mentioned the casket, which was to be given me after her demise.

Marianne informed me that they were all in

the greatest grief, that they could not resolve to remain at Sproughton, and that they were leaving to go to a friend's, whose name she did not give; that on their return, in three weeks, she would wait for me at Suffolk.

I tenderly loved Fanny; I was deeply afflicted. My stay in London became unbearable. I went to spend two months at Bath, where there were but few people; I lived there very quietly. I took advantage of the opportunity to improve my English. I went to board with sensible people who did not speak French; I made some progress.

While at Bath, I received letters from M. de Maurepas, by a singular chance. He informed me that the matter of M. de Bussy's expedition to India had been dropped; he asked me to write him frequently from London. War between Russia and Turkey at that time appeared inevitable. I asked M. de Maurepas to obtain for me permission to serve as a volunteer in the Russian army. He replied that he did not believe that the Empress wished any French officers in her army; that if she made an exception in my favour, the King would be delighted, that he would give

me the strongest letters of recommendation and would permit me to accept a place should it be offered.

I wrote to the Empress; I received a most amiable reply by return mail. She offered me the command of a company of light horse, which I accepted. I informed M. de Maurepas to that effect and prepared to leave for Saint Petersburg towards the middle of December.

On my return to London, I found that Sir Robert Harland and his family had arrived two days before me. Edouard called on me: we went to dine together at his parent's-in-law; I was received very kindly. I noticed that Marianne was less at her ease with me than usual. A few days after, I was left alone with her and, with extreme embarrassment, she asked me for her letters. I returned them to her immediately and I had no difficulty in seeing that, while nursing his wife, Edouard had fallen in love with his sister-in-law, and that a bit of jealousy had decided him to do all in his power to keep me away from Sproughton, where he thought that I might see Marianne too much.

I became solely interested in securing the casket left me by Mme. Dillon; Edouard told me that he knew nothing about it. I questioned Mme. Dillon's maid. She told me that she had received the casket from her mistress, and that the casket was to be given to me alone; that she had turned it over to M. Edouard who had promised to see that it would reach me. Edouard said that this was not true; that the maid did not know what she was talking about, and I did not get the casket. I received letters from Mme. Dillon which spoke of the poor Mme. Edouard, as of an abominable person. I was shocked at this and did not conceal it from Mme. Dillon, declaring that I should never permit the memory of my friend to be attacked in my presence.

The news of the defeat of the English army commanded by General Burgoyne, at Saratoga, decided France to take sides with America; and a few days before my departure for Russia, M. de Maurepas advised me to give up the idea; that I should soon be employed in the King's service, and to remain in England in the meantime.

One day when I was riding alone, rather sadly,

on the Richmond road, a woman carried away by her horse and much frightened, passed swiftly near me, uttering piercing shrieks. I rode a very swift horse; I caught up with her easily and stopped her mount before any accident had befallen her. I proposed that she should ride my horse which was much more gentle than hers; she accepted, and two men of a certain age with servants who were following her from afar soon joined her. This woman who might possibly have been twenty years of age was one of the most charming persons I had ever seen. I asked who she was; she told me that her name was Miss Stanton, and that she was the niece of one of the managers of the Indian Company. I often met her at the play, at the Pantheon, at the Ranelagh, always with these two men; she each time suggested that I take a cup of tea with her. I thought her very bright and pleasant. The two men appeared amiable and sensible, all three always seemed to be very glad to see me: she never proposed that I go to her house, and I did not care to ask permission.

One morning when I was walking rather early

some miles from Chelsea, a heavy shower overtook me; a coach which was passing stopped and Miss Stanton, who was alone and who had recognised me, offered to bring me back to Chelsea, where she said she had a house. She was alone. I accepted. I had lunch with her at her house, where no one came. She asked me many questions to which I replied frankly; asked me if I had a love affair in London, I told her no; she made me swear that I had no mistress and then told me that it was but just that I should know who she was. She added that she was not the niece, but the mistress of the older of the two men with whom I had seen her; that this man, good and respectable in every respect, had an immense fortune and that she believed that a marriage between them depended on her.

She never saw anyone but him and his friend, who also was interested in India affairs; that she went out when she pleased, went where she wished with one of the two and more often with both; that she rather liked that sort of life, and that since the day I had stopped her horse, she had taken to me so lively a fancy, that she would not

have concealed it had she not feared to grieve a man whom she liked and respected. He had left for Ireland with his friend two days before, his affairs were to keep him there about six weeks; she stopped speaking. I asked her for the six weeks of which she could dispose without danger. She consented with pleasure, and I may say that I never spent six weeks more quietly or happily.

Miss Juliette (for that was her name) was romantic, frank, sensitive, solely occupied with what she liked. Her education had not been neglected; she spoke both French and Italian well, was a good musician, had a charming voice and played several instruments. She was extremely dainty and the best idea I can give of her face is a close resemblance to Mme. de Champcenetz in her best days. We daily went out riding or driving in a phaeton, over the most deserted roads. We went to the play in the small boxes, and we returned to the house together. I hardly went into society once a week; I daily became more attached to her.

Our relations had been going on for five weeks,

when one morning I found her in full mourning and mortally sad.

" What's happening? " said I.

" I have lost," she replied, " either my lover or the man whom I look upon as my benefactor and a father. M. Stanton arrives to-morrow. Fulfil your destiny, go to war, forget me, be happy. I shall weep for you long; do not return here again even though you should be asked. I hope to meet you again."

It was with sorrow that I separated from this amiable creature. I met her two or three times at the Ranelagh; she greeted me very pleasantly. M. Stanton invited me to supper, with a glance she warned me to refuse, and I obeyed. Shortly after, she left with M. Stanton for an estate he had purchased in the north of England. I believe that she has now returned to India with him: she has never written to me.

Going more into society than I had ever done since I was in England, I saw people of every party who spoke freely before me, and without trying, I was soon well posted on all public affairs, and I learned interesting matters of which the

marquis de Noailles, our ambassador, could not know. He had intelligence, consideration, and, were it not for his mistake of living too retired a life, I believe he would have been a good ambassador. I believe that he would have gone into society more, had it not been for the unimaginable stupidity of his wife, who embarrassed him every instant by the unbelievable things she said without anything being able to stop her. I can not help giving an example:

At a very grand dinner given at her residence, she suddenly said that she could not understand why people spoke so much of the modesty of English women; that there were no women in Europe whose morals were more depraved, and that they spent their lives in evil places. One can imagine the despair and consternation of the marquis de Noailles.

"But, madame de Noailles, but really . . . do you consider . . . do you know what you are saying?"

She paid no attention and continued:

"Yes, monsieur, I am sure of it, and during the last masked ball, the Duchess of Devonshire and

Lady Granby were for more than three hours in an evil place of the neighbourhood."

The ambassador almost died of mortification, and the others of laughter.

Madame, the ambassadress, made me forget to say that, when I knew of things with which I supposed M. le marquis de Noailles was not acquainted, I told him of them, although having but little to do with him, never thinking of informing M. de Maurepas.

Chance caused to fall into my hands a copy of Lord North's Conciliatory Bill for America, long before he read it in Parliament. I went to the marquis de Noailles to ask him if he had read it; he affected the most important and ministerial air and answered: "Yes." I knew that this was impossible, and changed the conversation. He tried to question me about the bill; I did not answer, and I went away.

I did not write to M. de Vergennes, with whom I had fallen out, but I at once sent a messenger to M. de Maurepas. He showed my letter to the King and the marquis de Noailles was only able to give an account of the matter two weeks after.

This gave the King and all his ministers the greatest idea of the manner in which I knew all that was going on in England. M. de Vergennes wrote me to ask that I communicate to him all my thoughts on all that I should see or hear. I replied coldly and politely that I had wholly given up politics and all the thoughts relating to it. I, however, sent M. de Voyer and M. de Maurepas some reports on but little known subjects. My correspondence became very regular and began to take up a great deal of my time. I went less into society. I was bored being alone; I took a girl who had little wit, who was very pretty, sweet, neat, exactly what I required.

Mme. de Lauzun did me the honour, at that time, to send me a statement drawn up by her attorney, relating to the outcome which our division of property might have in the future, when she should inherit from one of her relatives, and specially about the precaution which should be taken so that I should not prevent her from disposing of her fortune. Mme. de Lauzun's attorney had not evidently a very good opinion of

me and did not conceal it. His formula was ridiculous and insolent. He repeatedly said:

"Mme. de Lauzun's attorney does not know why M. de Lauzun should pretend . . . Mme. de Lauzun's attorney would be astonished that in view of M. de Lauzun's conduct, he should . . ."

I replied merrily and without anger to Mme. de Lauzun. My reply to her attorney began by:

"M. de Lauzun informs Mme. de Lauzun's attorney first, that he is an impertinent fellow; then that he does not know what he is talking about; and, to close with him, that he heartily consents to all that may please Mme. de Lauzun, whatever that may be."

At the beginning of the month of March, 1778, I sent to M. de Maurepas a very extensive and detailed report on the conditions of defence of England and of all the English possessions in the four quarters of the world. He read my report to the Council. It created a sufficient impression to cause him to deem it necessary to send for me to consult about some special items. The

letter I received informed me that the King wished that I betake myself to Versailles as promptly and as secretly as possible.[30]

I went to Versailles; I had several private conversations with the King, at M. de Maurepas', who pushed me forward with a tenderness truly paternal. M. de Maurepas, grieved at my falling out with M. de Vergennes, was very anxious to reconcile us; I was not in the least disposed that way; I could not, however, resist his pressing solicitations. We became reconciled without an explanation, and I believe that M. de Vergennes was as honest in his dealings as I, for since then I have always been satisfied with him, and he has appeared to seek every occasion to show me interest and friendship.

The ministers exhibited much confidence in me; and, according to the measures I saw taken, I could consider the war as certain. I made bold to propose a great and superb undertaking: I wanted before beginning the war, that the Bank of England should be made bankrupt, and this was no difficult matter. I had found a means of knowing what funds it had, which were not very

large, and the resources with which it might be assisted, in a pressing emergency, which were still smaller. A simple banking operation, whose result would have been to draw, for large sums in gold, through all the important cities of Europe, on the largest commercial houses of London, in the same week, would have compelled all the bankers to withdraw at once all their funds from the bank. The crowd of anxious people would have increased the lack of confidence and nothing could prevent the bank from failing.

When I spoke of this in committee it was received with the greatest applause. M. Necker, who was not there and to whom it was communicated the next day, was wholly opposed. He said that it would ruin all the Paris banking houses. I did not believe that; I went to Paris to secure information. I came back with the declaration from all the bankers that they had nothing to lose in the bankruptcy of the Bank of England, except M. M. Germain, a house considered by M. Necker, as deeply interested in the Bank of England. He prevented this plan from being carried out. He did more, he sent to England an immense

quantity of gold in species to assist the bank should an attempt be made to embarrass it. The King had the intention to commence the war by a descent on England at several points. I was too much in fashion not to be employed in a brilliant manner, and during six months no expedition was considered without my being mentioned to command it as chief or as second. The government suddenly changed its mind, and ended by the ridiculous declaration of the month of March, 1778, in which the saving warning was given England to prepare for war.

I did not wish to return to England. M. de Maurepas insisted. He had no doubt that the King of England would begin by recalling his ambassador and dismissing that of France, and would soon thereafter wish to enter into negotiations. He knew that the King of England would rather treat with me than with anyone else; he therefore told me to remain in England as long as I possibly could without inconvenience; he hoped that good intelligence would be re-established between the two Courts; that, peace once assured, baron de Breteuil would come back

from Vienna, the marquis de Noailles would be sent there, and I should be given the embassy of England. M. de Maurepas specially recommended to me to conceal from the marquis de Noailles the object of my mission, and to find some pretext for remaining in London after his departure. I arranged matters so as to reach London two or three days after the declaration. I immediately called on the ambassador of France, who was tremendously astonished to see me. He apparently thought that I was deserting.

"Delighted to see you, certainly . . . but how does it happen . . .? Do you not know?"

"I beg pardon . . ."

"Then you have not seen M. de Maurepas?"

"Of course I have. Here are some letters from him and from M. de Vergennes."

The latter requested him to communicate his dispatches to me, and all interesting matters he should hear.

While I was with him, he received a letter from Lord Weymouth in reply to the notification of the declaration. He said in it that out of per-

sonal consideration for M. le marquis de Noailles, the King of England permitted him to inform the marquis that he was recalling his ambassador to the Court of France.

M. le marquis de Noailles told me that he was going to send a messenger to Versailles at once, on whose return he would surely receive the order to leave England immediately. He proposed that we arrange to return together. I told him that it was impossible for me to do so, and that, judging from appearances, my affairs would detain me a few weeks after his departure; he replied that he considered himself obliged to tell me that such a course would not be proper, either for France or for England. I assured him that no one in England would be shocked and that I hoped that the King of France would not take it ill. He could not, in truth, do otherwise than agree with me; if my affairs were a question of money, he offered me with the greatest pleasure in the world all that I might require.

I suppose that he thought I was in love; for he suddenly affected his ministerial air; and told me that it would be his duty to forbid me, in

the King's name, to remain in England. I replied coldly that I did not consider that he had the right to do so, that consequently this would change nothing in my intentions; that I should be sorry only if he did something which would probably be disapproved. The ambassador was confounded, and madame, his wife, broke into a fit of anger that rendered her a hundred times more stupid and ridiculous, and which ten times almost made me burst into laughter. The marquis' messenger returned. He left for France and left me in England.

M. le marquis de Noailles' messenger brought me letters from M. de Maurepas, with instructions more extensive than the first, recommending me to remain in England as long as I could properly do so. I asked the King of England, through Sir Charles Thompson, one of the men he liked best, if my stay in London displeased him. He sent me word with much graciousness that I could remain as long as I wished, that if I wished to see and speak to him, I should meet him on the following Wednesday, riding on the Richmond Road, at eight o'clock in the

morning: I was there punctually; he came to me, and told me that he was very glad to assure me of his interest and good will before I left England; that my stay depended on myself; and that I might return, whenever I desired, if I did not fear that it would injure me in my own country. He was personally offended at France and called it perfidious; he spoke of it with such warmth, that I was obliged to remind him that I was a Frenchman. He ended the conversation by saying that no one would be more satisfactory than I, to treat of peace, or as ambassador, when circumstances would permit, and that he would then take all the necessary steps with the greatest pleasure.

I could no longer honestly remain in England. I rendered an account of this conversation to M. de Maurepas, earnestly asked to return, and I advised him that if I received no orders, I should leave London in a month. The month passed without my receiving a reply. I was about to go; my carriage was at the door when I received, through a messenger from Spain, a letter from M. de Maurepas, who earnestly asked me to re-

main six weeks more. This did not stop me, I left. On my arrival at Calais, I advised M. de Maurepas of the reasons that had prevented me from doing what he desired; he was sorry, but bore me no ill will.

My regiment was in garrison at Ardres, near Calais; I stopped there instead of going to Paris. I had brought with me an English miss. I rented a small château at a quarter of a league from Ardres. I devoted much of my time to my regiment and rather liked it. The devout duc de Croy, under whose orders I was, acquired such a friendship for me, that he forgave me for having a mistress, and even came to my house to take tea with her. Miss Paddock had brought from England a young sister much more pretty and amiable than she, and whose extreme poverty seemed to destine her to the same lot as her sister. I did not consider it right to permit this; I respected her innocence, placed her in a convent at Calais, supplied her with masters; and I have since been happy enough to marry her advantageously to a man she liked.

Although absent, the ministers, to whom M.

de Voyer did not cease to say that I was suitable for any place, intended me for every expedition which they planned successively, and M. de Voyer proposed to intrust me with the conquest of Jersey and of Guernsey; he wrote asking to try and secure information about these two islands, and to report the number of troops I required to attack them. Chance had brought to my hands very well written and detailed reports on Jersey and Guernsey. I sent them to M. de Voyer, and advised him that with three thousand good soldiers, and great secrecy, I thought I could promise success. This expedition was decided upon at Versailles, where much value appeared to be placed on it. Its success would in effect have been of great importance for our commerce; it was necessary, however, to consult M. le maréchal de Broglie, who commanded the King's troops assembled at the camp of Vaucieux; he was wholly opposed to the idea, without knowing a single word about it; he assured them that at least ten thousand men and several general officers would be required; this angered

the ministers; they preferred to abandon the matter rather than to discuss it.

M. de Voyer proposed to surprise the Isle of Wight and Portsmouth at the same time and to totally ruin the best establishments of the English navy; he was to carry out his project himself and give me the command of all the grenadiers and chasseurs of his army: as usual they began by accepting; they discussed after, and the affair was promptly dropped. M. de Sartines wanted to send me to the Bermudas, to Saint Helena and to some other places,— but without any greater success.

During that time, my regiment received orders to go to the camp of Vaucieux, and left Ardres about the middle of July; I went with it. On the second day of the march, I received a message from M. de Sartines and an order from the King to report at Versailles and to leave my regiment: I reached M. de Sartines'; he told me that M. de Bussy was to receive all he demanded to undertake a great revolution in India, and that he still wanted me as second in command. He pro-

posed that I raise a corps of four thousand foreign troops, and to give me its command. He wanted me to have two thousand men ready to leave with me in the month of November, and the remainder in a condition to follow four months after. I accepted. I gave up the regiment of royal dragoons whose command I obtained for M. de Gontaut. I left the war department and passed into that of the navy, still retaining my rank in the land troops. I then did a thing which I believe to be without a precedent; for in less than three months, I raised, armed, equipped, and put in condition to serve a superb corps of two thousand men.

I asked the King's permission to tell the Queen of my destination. I called on her; I asked to speak to her privately, a thing which had not occurred for a long time. I told her that I thought that I owed it to the former kindnesses with which she had honoured me to inform her that the King confided to me the second command of the East India army, under the orders of M. de Bussy. I never saw a more astonished person; she was unable to see without feeling that man

whom two years before she had treated so well, who was then accused of intriguing against her, go and spend several years at the other end of the earth. Her tears flowed, she remained a few minutes unable to say anything but:

"Ah! monsieur de Lauzun! Ah: *mon-Dieu!*"

She recovered a little and continued:

"How! go so far, separate yourself for so long a time from all you love, from all who love you?"

"I have thought, madame, that, on so distant a stage, my zeal, the little talent I may have, might meet fewer obstacles, that more justice might be rendered them; they would have less to struggle against intrigue and calumny!"

"You will leave us, Lauzun? You will go to India? Can I not prevent it?"

"I am irrevocably attached to this engagement, whatever it may cost me."

The King entered.

"Well!" said the Queen to him, "M. de Lauzun is going to India then?"

"Yes," replied the King; "he wishes it: it is a

great sacrifice. I have no doubt he will be very useful there."

The Queen came in the evening to Mme. de Guéménée's, whose favour had not yet diminished; she told her that she viewed the decision I had taken with sorrow, and urged her to make me change my mind. Mme. de Guéménée replied that she was in despair at my going, but that she considered it impossible to hold me back; she, however, did what she could to make me remain. The Queen's heart had appeared to her deeply touched; she thought that she could answer for it if I did not go. I resisted all although I did not conceal from myself the greatness of the sacrifice. My vanity was satisfied: I refused the Queen with pride. I showed her that I wished nothing from her and that I could play an important part without her; I proved to Mme. Czartoryska that Europe had no longer any charms for me, after having lost her.

I went to Haute-Fontaine, and it was a powerful test for my courage; I could not think, without a mortal sadness, that perhaps I should never again see persons who were very dear to me.

M. de Guéménée was in the greatest grief, Mme. Dillon shared it, and twenty times a day my tears were ready to flow. I found Mme. de Martinville at Haute-Fontaine; I knew her but little; I had given her two brothers places in my regiment, at the solicitation of M. de Narbonne. She thanked me for it, and appeared to take the liveliest interest in my fate; this interest increased daily; she continually repeated that she was unable to understand what could prompt me to thus expatriate myself, asked me details as to my situation, my thoughts, my sentiments, rendering me so to say, without noticing it the tenderest attention. I saw very well that owing to hearing me so pitied she had become interested, and had acquired a great liking for me. She was beautiful and tender; I shared her feelings; she flew into my arms with pleasure, with sincerity; her *liaison* with me was approved at Haute-Fontaine, where people love more; I spent there all the time which my affairs did not compel me to pass at Paris or at Versailles.

One evening, while reading at home in Paris the *London Magazine,* I found in it a report of

the English possessions on the coast of Africa and of their garrisons. I saw that they were in very poor condition, and could easily be taken. I talked about the matter with M. Francis, who was with me. We spoke of it together the next day to M. de Sartines. I proposed to him, that while the fleet going to India should be taking in water at the islands of Cape Verde, to detach a vessel from it, a few frigates and four or five hundred men, to take Senegal-Gambia and destroy the English establishments on the coast. This plan pleased him; he asked me if I wished to carry it out.

I did not care to, for I could get nothing but dangers, embarrassments, and not the slightest glory from this expedition. I finally consented, and we agreed that I should leave at the end of October, that I should go to the island of Oléron to pass my reviews, that I should then very secretly betake myself to Brest, that the garrison would supply me with whatever troops I should need, that the convoy bearing what I should have judged indispensable for this undertaking would join me below Belle-Isle, where I

was to anchor; and that after having taken Senegal, left a garrison there and established order in all the King's acquisitions, a frigate should carry me to the islands of Cape Verde, which would be very near, and where I should join M. de Bussy and the army of India.

I departed the 28th of October; I left Mme. de Martinville in despair, and went to the isle of Oléron. The troops I had raised were superb and ready to embark. I lost no time, and betook myself to Landerneau, near Brest, in the last days of November. I had not been there three hours, when I received a message from M. de Sartines, who requested me to come to Versailles at once.

I left fifteen minutes after; I rode day and night; I reached Versailles at four o'clock in the morning. M. de Sartines had given orders to be awakened. I saw him immediately; he told me that unforeseen difficulties had delayed the departure of M. de Bussy, and had even made it uncertain; that M. le chevalier de Ternay, chief of squadron, and former governor of Ile de France, was undertaking the same things at much

less expense, and that he wished me to command in chief the land troops intended for landing.

I asked to see the propositions, the plan of M. le chevalier de Ternay and his instructions; I saw clearly that he had taken advantage of the confidence of M. de Bussy, and of the reports he had communicated to him to supplant him by asking much less than he. I refused absolutely to serve with M. le chevalier de Ternay; there was nothing M. de Sartines left undone to change my resolution, but uselessly.

I saw him again the next day, and he renewed his entreaties, offering me everything that might make my commission more brilliant and agreeable; he went so far as to offer, should I have a mistress whom I could not take with me, to have an important fortune assured her by the King, and to give me for my sole use a frigate, whose command I might bestow on whoever I pleased. I refused everything. It was decided that I should go to Senegal; that if, before the 15th of February, I received no order from the Court, I should return to France, that my corp should not serve without me and should not be separated.

Hardly had I left M. de Sartines when M. de Bussy entered. M. de Sartines showed him the report of the chevalier de Ternay, without naming the author. M. de Bussy told him that the report was wretched, full of falseness and bad calculations; that if he who had made it was not a fool, he was assuredly a scoundrel. M. de Sartines was dismayed, made serious reflections, and began to repent having wished to employ M. le chevalier de Ternay, and to seek the means of getting rid of him if possible.

I went to spend twenty-four hours in Paris, where I saw Mme. de Martinville, to whom so unexpected a visit caused the greatest joy. I then returned to Brest, where I embarked very mysteriously on board of the *Fendant,* a vessel of 74 guns, commanded by the marquis de Vaudreuil. Our little squadron was composed of two vessels of the line, two frigates, a few corvettes, and a dozen transports.

Winds constantly contrary kept us two weeks in the bay, without my daring to go on land. I received a rather well-written, anonymous letter, in which I was warned that M. de Sartines, won

over by my enemies, wished to have me killed, and consequently had given me a commission from which I could not return. As proof of the charge it was stated that none of the things indispensable to the success of my undertaking were on board of the vessels where they should be, and that the statement which M. de Sartines had given me, and that which had been sent me from Lorient, were equally false. I was pitied; my courage was praised, my activity also; my imprudence was condemned. I had a good opinion of M. de Sartines; I had confidence in his friendship. This letter made no impression on me; I sent it to him and departed.

We were obliged to anchor at Cape Blanco, to take from our transports the things necessary for the attack on Senegal; I saw with grief and anxiety that what the anonymous letter had said was but too true: either through neglect or the rascality of the subordinates, none of the things promised by M. de Sartines, none of the things included in the statement he had given me was to be found; the pilots of the bar, who had been supplied to me by the Navy department, had no knowl-

edge of it. M. de Vaudreuil, frightened, proposed that we abandon the whole affair; I would not consent to it. It seemed to me that my landing might be made without exposing the King's vessels; and if the bar was not protected by batteries, on dismantled vessels called pontoons, having only the danger of the bar to risk, I might yet succeed, but should there be a pontoon, it would be necessary to attack it sword in hand, and but few men would probably return.

The vessels anchored before the bar out of danger; I entered a ship's boat with an officer of the navy, and we went to sound the bar, which we passed without difficulty. We went some distance into the river and saw no pontoons; we recrossed the bar * and returned on board of the vessels.

The next day, the weather was quite fine; we embarked the landing troops on sixteen small boats; we crossed the bar with a little more difficulty than the evening before, but without accidents; we found no pontoons, and two days after,

* "This bar is so dangerous, that during the three months I spent at Senegal, I saw eighteen boats of all kinds perish in crossing it, although they had native pilots on board, and did not draw much water." (Lauzun's note.)

30th January, 1779, we found ourselves opposite the fort, which surrendered after having exchanged a few shots.

I set to work to re-establish order, inspire confidence in the inhabitants, the tradesmen especially, and to treat the prisoners well. All was much quieter twenty-four hours after my arrival than twenty-four hours before. As early as the second day I sent the frigates and the corvettes to Gambia and to the other settlements that were along the coast.

I wrote to M. le marquis de Vaudreuil that the colony having no need of the protection of the King's vessels, he was free to set the date of his departure for Martinique, where he had orders to go and join M. d'Estaing. He replied that he would attend to the matter as soon as he had taken all the supplies of which he had need for himself and his sick, whose numbers increased daily.

As it was possible and even quite probable that I should be attacked shortly after the departure of M. de Vaudreuil, I wanted to establish as a pontoon, in the river, a corvette carrying rather large guns, and which was at my disposal; M. de

Vaudreuil and all the officers of the navy decided that it could not pass over the bar, and that it was impossible. I returned to take soundings. I tried to pass my corvette, and succeeded. M. de Vaudreuil, who did not care to go and serve under the orders of M. d'Estaing, wished to use up his supplies and take this pretext for returning. He sent and asked me for an exorbitant supply of provisions, in the hope that I should be unable to grant his request, and that this would be a reason for not following his instructions. I sent him all he asked, although I found it rather hard; he was not content with this. He built on land, in an unhealthful spot, a hospital for 400 sick who made all sorts of trouble, and came near causing me a war with the natives, and he informed me that he could not leave because he was short of sailors.

I laid up all my vessels, even the one on which I was to return to Europe, and I sent him the sailors, telling him that I should take charge of his hospital, which I did, and which caused us such scarcity, that during eight or ten days we had, as well as all the healthy members of the colony, only corn bread and bad fish. Seeing that in spite

of this M. de Vaudreuil did not leave, I requested him officially to assemble a council of war to know what he should do, which determined him to set sail three days after. He was still able to rejoin M. d'Estaing in time to be at the combat of the Granada.

I was more at ease, and I saw with interest and curiosity a country where nothing was as in Europe. I received the visit of several Kings of the neighbourhood, with whom I made treaties. I received the news of the taking of Gambia, and of a few other forts. I immediately sent an officer to France, with the report of my easy successes; I wanted to remain until I had put the island in a state of defence; I succeeded so well that Admiral Hughes, who expected to retake it with a large squadron, on his way to India, after having attempted to attack it, gave it up the second day.

When all was finished, I armed a merchant vessel as a cartel-ship, to return on it with prisoners. I was for a moment much embarrassed; I wished to leave enough to pay the garrison and to maintain the colony. I had been supplied with a treas-

urer; but the precaution had been taken to give him no money, and the little I had brought for my use had already been spent for the King's service. The English prisoners got me out of trouble by lending to me personally all the cash money they had. I went away to the great regret of the entire colony, which gave me the greatest marks of attachment. I had tried to help them; I had succeeded in some respects, and the unfortunates were not in the habit of being governed by honest people.

After a passage of thirty-six days, I arrived at Lorient very opportunely; for we had no more supplies nor water. I was not overly well received at Versailles, when I reached there. M. de Maurepas was not on good terms with M. de Sartines; the Senegal expedition had displeased the King; people were almost angry with me for having taken it; hardly did the King speak to me the first day; later, however, he treated me very kindly. I received neither rank nor pay. M. de Sartines offered to give me a present in money. I refused. Many things had changed during my absence.

M. le chevalier de Ternay had been deprived of the command of the India squadron. The news of the taking of Pondicherry had suspended all armament for that part of the world. M. de Sartines had broken the most sacred promises made me; he had scattered my corps all over the globe. I was left no way of serving in a proper manner; he felt embarrassed about the matter; he knew not what to say to me; he avoided me with the greatest care. I sent him my resignation, and no longer sought to see him.

The Court was at Marly. I found Mme. de Lauzun there, intimately connected with the circle of comtesse Jules, with all the people who sought to injure me, who were successful in their aim, and who were in favour; one cannot imagine the way I was treated by the Queen and consequently by all the rest. People hardly looked at me. This was very much noticed, and I was stupid enough to be for a moment embarrassed by it.

In the evening pharaon was played: I played a few *louis* to keep up my countenance, behind M. de Fonsac; Mme. la marquise de Coigny,[31] daughter of Mme. de Conflans, my friend for a

long time, whom I hardly knew, was seated near him.

Mme. de Coigny spoke to me. I was really ridiculously grateful to her for her act. I found much wit and charm in her; I warned her that she would succeed neither at Court, nor in her family, if she spoke so much to me, and that she need have much courage to do it. She replied that she knew it perfectly well. Never had anything appeared to me so charming, so amiable; I became indifferent to all the rest. She gave me back my assurance, my gaiety; I was less sullen, I spoke to the Queen, I made jests; she laughed, I amused her; she recalled that it was not the first time, and the end of the evening was as brilliant as the beginning had been dull. I, however, took away from Marly an impression of sadness: I did not know when I should again see the amiable Mme. de Coigny. I had as yet met no one who resembled her; she filled my heart, she filled my mind.

CHAPTER IX

CHAPTER IX

(1779–1781)

Monsieur de Sartines was much embarrassed by my resignation; he knew not how to tell the King that I had left the service, that I was right in leaving it and that it was his fault. He had M. de Maurepas, with whom he was beginning to be on better terms, speak to me about it. I replied to M. de Maurepas that I left the navy department because M. de Sartines had solemnly promised to me not to separate my corps, and that he had dispersed it; that he had promised to complete it as soon as he could, and that on the contrary, he had preferably taken in his department the corps of M. de Nassau, which had not been raised for the King's service; that I did not complain, but no longer wished to serve. On the evening of this conversation, the King spoke of it to me very frankly and with much kindness. He

told me that he would give his orders to M. de Sartines, and that he wished me to be well treated and satisfied.

About this time M. le prince de Nassau made an attempt on Jersey which was unsuccessful. He had gone to enormous expense and was ruined and without resources, if the King had not taken over his regiment and his debts. M. le prince de Montbarey, minister of war, since the death of M. de Saint-Germain, offered to give me as mine the royal German regiment of which M. de Nassau was colonel-owner, telling me that the King would pay his debts only on that condition. I did not hesitate; I declared that I should rather go without a place all my life than to take advantage of the misfortunes of another; I flatly refused.

M. de Sartines wished to negotiate with me for my return to his department; he made me the following propositions, which were confirmed by M. de Montbarey, which I accepted and which neither one nor the other kept; they were: To make me colonel-owner-inspector of a legion composed of 1,800 infantry soldiers, of 600 cavalry, who could never be separated, and to give me or rather to

renew for the King, the promise of the command of the first regiment of Foreign cavalry which might be vacant in the war department, and to attach me in the meantime to the Hungarian cavalry. When this was done, and I had given orders in Germany for new recruits,[32] I went to Haute-Fontaine with Mme. de Martinville, whose relations with me continued to be very pleasant.

The bitter and just complaints of the manner in which France treated prisoners of war, the enormous mortality which had resulted in the prisons, made me resolve out of humanity to ask M. de Sartines to let me be inspector-general of the prisoners of war, without pay, at my own expense. M. de Sartines accepted with joy and gratitude, and gave me all the necessary authority to prevent abuse and knavery.

I was preparing for this new inspection, when I heard of the formation of an army intended for a descent on England. I applied to M. de Montbarey for a place in that army: he told me that it was impossible. M. de Sartines told me that he was very sorry, but that the matter did not depend on him. I was much shocked to hear

it: it seemed to me that I deserved not to be forgotten. I wrote to the King; he replied that I had done well to apply to him, that my request was just, and that I should be employed in the advance guard of M. de Vaux. My regiment served excellently and very gaily, although overwhelmed with service, and although M. de Sartines had once more failed in his promises towards us. M. de Vaux was, as usual, pedantic, flat and mediocre, and under an air of austerity always the lowest of adulators of favour.

This army was so queerly made up in the matter of general officers that I cannot help speaking of it. M. de Jaucourt, general sergeant-major (I have heard it said somewhere that he was like Abbé Roguenet, who had not been able to get a hat out of his cassock), M. de Lambert, his deputy, noticed it, and whispered it to all who wished to hear it. M. de Jaucourt avenged himself, by making him continually repeat the ingenious task of the embarking of the troops. M. de Puységur, major-general, held his place perfectly; he made jest of his generals and of his colleagues, and shook his head more than a hundred times in speaking

of them. M. le marquis de Créquy, confidential aide-de-camp of the general-in-chief, assisted him in supplying us with poisoned food, and employed the rest of his time in playing mean subaltern tricks, some of which were rather funny. M. le comte de Cergny, under the character of aide-de-camp of M. de Jaucourt, smoked in the general's antechamber to appear like an old partisan, and wrote reports on the war as soon as one entered his room. M. le marquis de Langeron, lieutenant-general, a loyal bore of a fellow, and a great punster. M. de Rochambeau, brigadier-general, commanding the advance guard, spoke only of war matters, manœuvres and took military dispositions in the plain, in the room, on the table, on your snuff-box, if you drew it out of your pocket; exclusively full of his profession, he understands it wonderfully. M. le comte de Caraman, always as neat as could be, mealy-mouthed, circumstantial, stopped in the street all those whose coats were buttoned crooked, and gave them little military instructions; he ceaselessly proved himself an excellent officer, full of knowledge and activity. M. Wall, brigadier-general, an old Irish officer,

resembled very much Harlequin, with the addition of wit, ate well, drank punch all day long, said that the others were right, and meddled with nothing. M. de Crussol, brigadier-general, suffering from an unmentionable ailment, had a crooked neck and a not over-straight mind.

While I was at Saint-Malo, M. le prince de Montbarey arranged the marriage of his daughter with M. le prince de Nassau-Saarbruck; and wishing to treat our M. de Nassau well, gave him a place in the grenadiers and chasseurs; and wishing him to have the advance guard of M. de Rochambeau's division, sent the order to place him, ahead of me, on the muster-roll of the army. M. de Puységur advised me of it. This was impossible to bear, being a colonel since 1767, and M. de Nassau since only 1770. There was no discussion possible in the matter; for I had had war detachments in Corsica in 1768. I wrote to M. le prince de Montbarey and to the King; my rank was restored to me.

M. de Vaux, to please the minister and leave to M. de Nassau the command of the advance guard, wished to employ me in the third rank. I

objected strenuously; I asked him if he was dissatisfied with my regiment or with me. He answered that he was much pleased with both: supposing that he did not like me personally, since he was satisfied with the way I served, I proposed to him to leave his army: he gave me back my place.

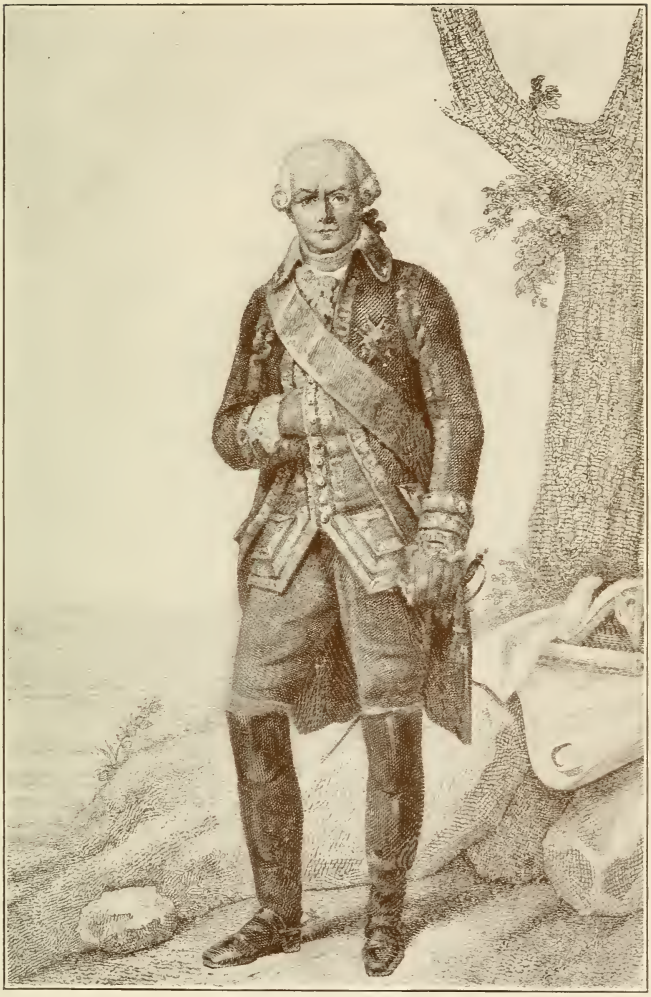
M. d'Orvilliers did not meet the English, did not fight; we did not embark, and at the end of November we returned to Paris. I found Mme. de Coigny very intimate with Mme. Dillon,[33] and I felt very happy over it; I often met her at Mme. de Guéménée's, who gave plays every Monday; she was quite pleasant, and, when she spoke to me, she gave me inexpressible pleasure; I could not account for the sentiments she aroused in me, I did not dare give way to them; they were not the less delightful.

M. de Sartines found it impossible to keep the conditions proposed by himself in the presence of M. de Vergennes; I gave them up, and I contented myself with what already existed, or nearly, that is to say, 800 infantry soldiers and 400 cavalry, under the name of Lauzun's Foreign Volun-

teers, of which I should be colonel-proprietor-inspector.

It was decided during the Winter to send a corps of French troops to America, and to give the command to M. de Rochambeau: I asked if I should be employed in that army. M. de Maurepas told me that it was too far, that it would take too long; that I should have, in concert with M. de Bougainville, the command of an interesting expedition on the coast of England or Ireland. M. de Rochambeau needed light troops, those offered to him did not suit him; he asked for me, he was refused at first; he insisted, consent was given; but this was decided only on the day he took leave of the King. I was amazed when he told me of it, M. de Sartines having assured me the evening before that the question had not been considered. Mme. de Martinville was shocked at the news; she wanted me to sacrifice this opportunity to her. I refused and we almost fell out.

The day of my departure for Brest approached; I did not call on Mme. de Coigny, I was very anxious to say good-bye to her. I met her at Mme. de Gontaut's; she promised me, jestingly,



ROCHAMBEAU.

to come to the Tuileries the next day to receive my adieux; she came over in fact with the comtesse Etienne de Durfort and a few men. I saw on that day to what extent I could love her. Ten times I was near telling her, at the moment I was about to leave her perhaps forever; it seemed to me that I risked nothing in opening my heart to her. I was not attached to life and she could make it so dear to me. I dared not, however. What one thinks most profoundly is often what one finds most difficult to express: I left two days after for Brest.

The troops were embarked at Brest, the 12th April, 1780; contrary winds and the convoy which was not ready prevented us from sailing before the 12th May;[34] besides, through lack of transports, we were obliged to leave behind a brigade of infantry, a third of the artillery and a third of my regiment. M. de Sartines had been scandalously deceived, with regard to the transport vessels; there was not a half of those which he was assured had been assembled. I was embarked on the *Provence,* a vessel of 64 guns, rather badly commanded.

We had very hard weather in the Bay of Biscay; the *Provence* lost two high masts. The captain signalled that he could not hold out at sea and asked to put in port. M. le chevalier de Ternay was not of the same opinion, had our masts examined, gave us carpenters to repair them, and we continued on our way. The 20th June, we saw five English war vessels and a frigate. This small squadron, much inferior to ours, could not escape us had we manœuvred properly; but M. le chevalier de Ternay wished to avoid a fight; he fought, however, during three quarters of an hour, at a distance; the English vessels escaped and got out of the affair much more gloriously than we.

On the 4th of July, at the mouth of Chesapeake Bay, sails were sighted and we discovered a convoy escorted by some war vessels. After having looked through his glass, M. de Ternay, without having had them reconnoitred by his frigates, sheered off; and went out of his course during the night. About midnight, two English frigates passed on our side and fired some shots at us; they were going fast, and we were unable to catch up to them. We finally anchored in the bay of

Rhode Island, after a trip of seventy-two days, having many sick and lacking supplies and water.

A few days after, a squadron of fifteen war vessels, commanded by Admiral Arbuthnot, came to cruise in the channel of Rhode Island. We received word from New York that a large part of the army was being embarked; we expected to be attacked at any moment. Had the English attempted it during the first month, they would undoubtedly have been successful; we had not had the time to intrench. In spite of the bad condition of our troops, we worked without respite at making redoubts and in fortifying our position.

M. de Rochambeau confided to me the command of all that was in the channel and within reach of the places where landings could be effected, and declared to us that he would not abandon Rhode Island and the squadron, and that he would defend himself there to the last man. The English squadron disappeared, our sick recovered, we began to be more at ease. M. de Rochambeau and General Washington made an appointment at a place called Hartford, on the continent, at

about a hundred miles from Rhode Island, where they had an interview of several days.

During this time, Admiral Rodney arrived from Europe; he came to cruise before Rhode Island with twenty vessels of the line. The squadron was brought to bear; once more we expected to be attacked; message after message was sent to M. de Rochambeau; after a cruise of a few days, Lord Rodney went away.

We then learned that the convoy before which M. le chevalier de Ternay had sheered off on the 4th of July, carried three thousand English soldiers, going from Charlestown to New York, and was escorted by only four or five frigates. With a little less haste, M. le chevalier de Ternay could easily have taken them. People cried against him in the squadron and in the army in the most indecent manner. He heard of it and was much affected. It is very true that any man a little less timid would have arrived in America with three or four English vessels, five or six frigates, and three thousand prisoners of war, and that it would have been a very brilliant manner in which to present ourselves to our new allies.

M. de Rochambeau had announced to America the second division of his army, and was awaiting it with extreme impatience. The moment was critical and affairs were in bad condition. The American army was short of men, money, supplies and clothes; the treason of Arnold and the defeat of General Gates at Camden increased this distress. M. de Rochambeau judged it necessary to send to France an officer of his army to explain his position, and solicit prompt and powerful assistance. The officer generals of his army, whom he had assembled, strongly approved this resolution, and proposed that he send me, my connexions with M. de Maurepas giving me more advantage over those who knew him less. He declared to them that he had selected his son.

On the eve of his departure, twelve English vessels appeared on our coast, and gave us some anxiety; but a gust of wind dispersed them during the night, and the next day young M. de Rochambeau left on the King's frigate, *l'Amazone*.

General Green, who had taken command of the army of the South after the defeat of General Gates, was asking for assistance, and specially for

cavalry that might be opposed to the corps of Colonel Tarleton, whom nothing could resist, and said that without it he could not answer that the provinces of the South would not submit to the King of England. General Washington was very desirous that M. de Rochambeau should send me there. I desired it also, hoping to be useful; I did not hesitate to ask to be employed in the South under the orders of M. de la Fayette, although I had waged war, as a colonel, long before he left college. M. de Rochambeau refused my request, my proceeding was much condemned in the army, specially by M. le marquis de Laval, who, as well as a few others, had promised themselves not to serve under the orders of M. de la Fayette, and had almost obtained from M. de Rochambeau the promise of not being made to serve under him. General Washington was grateful for what I had done, and has often since proved it to me.

M. de Rochambeau put his army in winter quarters at Newport. The want of fodder obliged him to send me into the forests of Connecticut, eighty miles distant. As I spoke English, I was

charged with an infinity of details mortally boring, but necessary.

I did not leave Newport without regret. I had made very pleasant acquaintances there.

Mme. Hunter, a widow, thirty-six years of age, had two charming daughters whom she had brought up in a perfect manner; she lived a very retired life and saw hardly anyone.

Chance had led me to make their acquaintance on my arrival at Rhode Island.

She acquired a friendship for me; I was soon considered as one of the family. I spent much of my time with them. I was taken quite ill. Mme. Hunter took me to her house, where I had the greatest and most touching care. I was never in love with the Misses Hunter; but were they my sisters, I could not have cared for them more, specially the older, who is one of the most amiable persons I have ever met.

I left for Lebanon the 10th of November, 1780. We had as yet received no letters from France.

Siberia alone can be compared to Lebanon, which is composed of only a few huts scattered in an immense forest.

I remained there until the 11th of January, 1781, when General Knox, commanding the American artillery, came, on behalf of General Washington, to inform me that the brigades of Pennsylvania and of New Jersey, tired of serving, had killed their officers, had revolted, had chosen chiefs among themselves, and that it was also feared that they might march on Philadelphia to have themselves paid by force, or that they might join the English army, which was not far away.

I immediately mounted my horse to go to Newport, to inform M. de Rochambeau, who was as embarrassed over the state of affairs as he was grieved, having no means of assisting General Washington, lacking money himself, and not having received a single letter from Europe since his arrival in America. At the end of a few days, we learned that Congress had sent a small sum on account, and that everything was quiet.

M. de Rochambeau sent me to New Windsor, on the North River, where General Washington had his headquarters about two hundred miles from the French army. General Washington received me very cordially, and expressed the desire

to employ me at once. He told me that he expected to go very soon to Newport to see the French army and M. de Rochambeau. He confided to me that M. Arnold having gone to Virginia to make great ravages, he had conceived the idea of having him taken while there; that he was going to have M. de la Fayette march by land, with all the light infantry of his army; that he asked that the King's squadron go and anchor in Chesapeake Bay, and land a detachment of the French army to cut the retreat of Arnold. He added that he would ask M. de Rochambeau to give me the command of this detachment, considering it as very essential that the French and American troops should live on good terms, as well as those who commanded them, and that the French officer might be able to speak to the American officers, and make himself understood by them.

I remained two days at general headquarters, and I nearly drowned while re-crossing the North River; it was filled with ice, which the tide carried with such rapidity that it was impossible to steer my boat; it turned sideways and filled with water;

it was about to be swamped, when a large cake of ice passed near the boat; we jumped on it, and from floe to floe, it took us nearly three hours to reach the shore, after having thought ourselves lost more than twenty times.

On my arrival at Lebanon, I learned of the death of M. le chevalier de Ternay, who was said to have died of grief, and I found orders from M. de Rochambeau which kept me a few days in Connecticut. I then went to Rhode Island, where people spoke openly of the sortie of the squadron with a detachment of the army. I called to ask M. de Rochambeau to be employed in it, he received me very badly; I explained to him that I asked more for justice than for favour, as it was my turn to march. He replied that there were no turns in the advance guard; two hours before he had been saying the opposite thing; he added that he liked zeal, but that ardour displeased him. I assured him that he would cure me wholly from that of serving under him; he grew milder, almost apologised, confided to me that he was under personal obligations to the marquis de Laval, that he had no other way of acknowledging them; that he had

promised not to employ him under a brigadier; that as this detachment was to operate separately from the corps of M. de la Fayette, to be but indirectly under his orders, the marquis de Laval had asked for it; I answered nothing, but he must have seen on my face that it was not just. I asked to be allowed to go as a volunteer; he said that it would be ridiculous, and refused me. During the day, M. de Rochambeau did some thinking, gave the command to baron de Vioménil, who had not asked for it, and did not employ M. le marquis de Laval as second, a thing which the latter never forgave him.

General Washington arrived at Newport. This arrangement was very disagreeable to him, and he did not conceal it. M. de Rochambeau had done two things which could not be agreeable to him: he was not giving him the officer he asked for, and he gave him one, on the contrary, who took away the command of the expedition from M. de la Fayette, to whom he had wished to give it; he made M. de Rochambeau notice that his requests might be considered as orders, but declined to make any changes in what he had done.

The squadron commanded by M. Destouches, former captain in the navy, set sail with twelve hundred soldiers, and a few days after, General Washington left Rhode Island. I accompanied him as far as Stamford, and I returned to my regiment, where I received a letter from M. de Rochambeau, which said that, as he might be attacked during the absence of the squadron, he desired that I should return near him. I obeyed.

It was ten months since we had left France, we had as yet not received a single letter nor an *écu;* the frigate *l'Astrée* arrived, and informed us that M. de Montbarey and M. de Sartines had left the cabinet and had been replaced by M. de Ségur and M. de Castries, who had decided that it was unnecessary to send a second division; I wrote at once to ask earnestly for the four hundred men of my regiment who had been held back and who could not be refused me without atrocious injustice.

About eighteen days after the departure of the squadron, there was sighted, in foggy weather, a squadron which was entering the harbour at full speed; general assembly was beaten, and the whole

army took up arms; we considered ourselves lost without hope. We did not think it was our squadron, and we were mistaken, it was; it had manœuvred so well that it had arrived at the mouth of Chesapeake Bay twenty-four hours after the English squadron, which had started three days later. It had been a glorious day for the King's arms; but the enemy had prevented us from entering the bay, consequently Arnold was out of danger. M. de la Fayette had missed his aim, and was a bit embarrassed. A few of our vessels had suffered much, particularly the *Conquérant,* on which the marquis de Laval was embarked, which fought gloriously, and lost many men.

I returned once more to Lebanon where M. de Rochambeau instructed me to assemble a large number of horses suitable for the artillery, and to prepare everything for the march of the army. At this time, the *Concorde,* a frigate coming from France, brought back M. le vicomte de Rochambeau, who had not been able to save himself even from ridicule, and M. de Barras, chief of squadron, who was sent to succeed to M. le chevalier de Ternay. The new instructions of the Court caused

M. de Rochambeau to desire an interview with General Washington to decide on the plan of campaign of the army and of the squadron. M. de Barras gave to M. de Rochambeau his full power. The generals met again at Hartford.

It was officially decided and signed at this conference that the French army should march as far as the North River, that it would join the American army there, and that the two combined armies should approach New York as near as possible; that the squadron would go to Boston to await the naval forces which were to come from Europe, as they would not be safe at Rhode Island, the island not being guarded by land troops.

The letters which M. de Rochambeau had received by the *Concorde* had proved to him that those whom he had best treated had been very little sparing of him in their letters, and chief among these the marquis de Laval, who, without bad intentions, had written freely to several women who had shown his letters. I had not spoken of M. de Rochambeau in my letters and my silence became a merit; he showed me more confidence, allowed me to see his plan of campaign, and wanted

to take me with him to Rhode Island for some preliminary dispositions.

We had hardly reached Newport, when the chevalier de Chastelux, whose lively brain can not keep the same ideas long, thought that it would be more advantageous that the squadron should wait in the roads of Rhode Island, the naval force which had been announced being able to join it more easily in Chesapeake Bay, where it was probable that it would arrive. The chevalier de Chastelux spoke of it with some of the captains of the navy; several were of the same opinion. He induced M. de Rochambeau to speak of it to M. de Barras, and to propose to him to have this point decided by a council of war, made up of land and naval officers. The council decided that the squadron should remain at Rhode Island. I opposed the decision with all my power; it was passed by a plurality of votes; I only obtained the concession that 400 French troops should be left there, together with a small number of American militia under the orders of M. de Choisy.

The council chose me to go and report what had taken place to General Washington. I was in-

clined to refuse the commission which was truly disagreeable; I was quite certain that he would be very much displeased to see that a matter already agreed upon and signed by himself and M. de Rochambeau should have been referred to the decision of a council of war. I was the only one, however, who could be sent. I travelled rapidly; I reached New Windsor and presented to him M. de Rochambeau's letter which was very badly written and constrained. It made him so angry that he did not wish to answer, and it was only on the third day, and out of consideration for me, that he handed me a very cold reply, in which he said that he stood by the agreement he had signed at the Hartford conference, but that he let M. de Rochambeau do whatever he wished, and sent him the necessary orders to assemble the militia of which he might have need. My arrival embarrassed M. de Rochambeau from whom I concealed nothing, and who was beginning to repent what he had done. A second council of war confirmed what had been decided in the first: the army began to march.

During the entire course of this war, the Eng-

lish seemed to be struck with blindness: they always did what they should not have done; they avoided the clearest and most certain advantages. After the departure of the army, it would have been sufficient to attack the French squadron at Rhode Island to destroy it; the idea did not even occur to them. The French army was crossing America in the finest order and under the greatest discipline, a prodigy of which neither the English, nor the American army, had ever given an example. I covered the march of the army at about fifteen miles on the right, and in the neighbourhood of forty miles from the North River. M. de Rochambeau received a letter from General Washington, saying that he intended to give me a secret mission and containing an order for me to be, by a forced march, with my regiment, two days after, at a rather far-off point. M. de Rochambeau sent for me in the middle of the night at a distance of fifteen miles, to give me General Washington's orders, who entered into no details with him. I was at the appointed place punctually, although the excessive heat and very bad roads rendered this march very difficult.

General Washington was there much before the two armies, and said that he intended to have me surprise a body of English troops encamped before New York to support fort Kniphausen, which was looked upon as the key of the fortifications of New York.

I was to march all night to attack them before daylight; he added to my regiment, a regiment of American dragoons, some companies of light-horse and a few battalions of American light infantry. He had sent by another road, at about six miles to the right, General Lincoln, with a corps of three thousand men, to surprise fort Kniphausen, which I was to keep from being relieved. He was to appear only when my attack should be begun, when I should send word to him to commence his. He amused himself by firing on a small post which had not seen him, and disclosed the entire corps which I was to take by surprise. It entered the fort, made a sortie on General Lincoln, who was beaten, and was almost lost and cut off from the army, had I not promptly come to his assistance.

Although my troops were well-nigh exhausted,

New York, from an Early Print.

I marched on the English; charged their cavalry and my infantry exchanged shots with theirs. General Lincoln took advantage of this to beat a retreat in rather bad order. He had two or three hundred men killed or taken and many wounded. When I saw him in safety, I began mine, which was very luckily executed, for I lost but few men.

I rejoined General Washington who was marching with a very large detachment of his army to the aid of General Lincoln, about whom he was very anxious; but his troops were so fatigued that they could go no farther. He exhibited the greatest joy to see me again and, in general orders, he gave my division the most flattering praise. I wished to take advantage of the opportunity to reconnoitre New York at close range. I accompanied him with about a hundred hussars; we exchanged many gun and cannon shots, but we saw all we wished to see. This expedition lasted three days and three nights and was excessively fatiguing, for we were on foot day and night, and we had nothing to eat but fruit which we found along the road. General Washington wrote

M. de Rochambeau the most flattering letter for me; but my general forgot to mention it in his correspondence to France. I was encamped at White Plains, where the two armies assembled the next day. General Washington gave me the command of the two advance guards. We remained six weeks in this camp, where I was very tired, continually making extensive foragings, and even in sight of the enemy's posts. General Washington and M. de Rochambeau again wished to reconnoitre New York; I was detailed to cover the party with all the cavalry of the two armies, all the light American infantry and a battalion of French grenadiers and chasseurs. A large detachment from the two armies, under chevalier de Chastelux and General Heatre, took up a position at some distance, so that I might make my retreat in that direction in case of accident. I easily forced back all I found on my passage, and I made a few prisoners. The generals took two days to reconnoitre, which was a dangerous affair, for they had to stand a lively cannon and musket fire. We broke up camp at White Plains a few days after, to cross the North River at Ringferry.

Fortunately the English did not come out of New York to follow us; for the march having been badly opened through the marshes, the entire artillery and the waggons of the army remained stuck in them during thirty-six hours, with no other escort than my regiment and a battalion of grenadiers and chasseurs which made up the whole rear guard under me. After the crossing of the North River, which was long and difficult, but which the English did not attempt to disturb, the army, to facilitate the supplies and the foragings, marched in two divisions one day apart; the American army marched by another road not far from ours. We were obliged to cross the Jerseys and to go about seventy miles at fifteen or twenty miles from the enemy and often nearer. We did not doubt that they would oppose our passage which they could certainly have done with success. M. de Rochambeau had led them to believe that his project was to attack New York, having sent an intelligent war commissary with a strong escort to establish ovens and stores at Chatham near New York.

M. de Rochambeau had gone forward to Phila-

Elk at the foot of Chesapeake Bay, fearing that Lord Cornwallis might greatly embarrass M. de la Fayette, whose division consisted of only two thousand Americans and M. de Saint-Simon's light troops, he caused to embark on all sorts of boats all the grenadiers and chasseurs of the army and all infantry of my regiment under the command of M. de Custine. I asked to march with my infantry, persuaded that those troops would fire before the others. General Lincoln followed us also by water at a little distance with light American infantry. M. de Custine, in a hurry to arrive first, took a swift sloop, and sailed without stopping and without giving me any orders until we reached the James River. On the third day of our voyage, we had very bad weather. The boats were awful, two or three turned over, and we had seven or eight men drowned. The weather compelled us to anchor before Annapolis; as we were about to set sail again, General Washington sent me word by his aide-de-camp to have the troops landed and not to leave before having received new orders.

The English squadron having appeared before

Chesapeake Bay, M. de Grasse had gone out to meet it, and had not yet returned. Three days after, one of the King's corvettes came to announce that M. de Grasse had beaten the English squadron, had taken two frigates, and had returned to anchor in the Bay. I immediately had the troops re-embarked. We had continual contrary winds, and took ten days to reach the mouth of the James River.

I found M. de Custine there, and as I was giving him an account of what had taken place in his absence, General Washington and M. de Rochambeau, who were not far off on a corvette, sent me word to come on board their vessel. General Washington told me that Lord Cornwallis having sent all his cavalry and a rather large corps of troops to Gloucester, opposite York, he feared that he was trying to retreat that way, and that consequently he had sent to watch him a corps of three thousand militiamen under the continental brigadier-general Wiedon, a rather good commander, but hating war which he had always refused to wage, and being specially in mortal fear of gun shots. Having become a brig-

adier-general by chance, the respectable officer was my senior in command; General Washington regretted this more than I, for he intended to give me that command. He told me that he would write to General Wiedon that he could continue to hold the honours of his rank, but that he would forbid him to meddle with anything. I explained to him that we did not understand this manner of serving, that if General Wiedon were under my orders, I should certainly make him obey, but that being under his I should obey his every order, that I had no objection to serve under him, if he wished it, and that he might count on me to get along very well with him.

I went with my regiment to join the corps of General Wiedon. The manner in which he blockaded Gloucester was queer; he was at more than fifteen miles from the enemy's posts, was dying of fear, and dared not send a patrol a half mile from his camp. He was the best man on earth, and all that he wished was to meddle with nothing. I proposed to him to advance towards Gloucester, and to go the next day and reconnoitre along the English posts; he consented, and we

started with fifty hussars. When we were within six or seven miles of the enemy, he told me that he considered it useless and very dangerous to go any further, and that we could learn no more; I pressed him so, that he did not dare refuse to follow. I forced back the enemy's posts, and approached sufficiently to get an exact idea of their position. My general was in despair; he told me he would go no further with me; that he did not wish to get killed.

I rendered an account to M. de Rochambeau of what I had seen; I informed him that the American militia was not to be counted on, and that it was indispensable to send me at least two more battalions of French infantry. I had neither artillery, supplies, nor powder. I asked for some: he sent me at once some artillery and eight hundred men drawn from the garrisons of the vessels under the orders of M. de Choisy, who, owing to his seniority, commanded General Wiedon and me.

M. de Choisy is a good and brave man, ridiculously violent, constantly in a passion, making scenes with everybody, and always without reason.

He began by sending General Wiedon and all the militia packing, told them that they were poltroons, and in five minutes frightened them almost as much as the English and assuredly that was saying a great deal. The very next day he wanted to go and occupy the camp I had reconnoitred. General Wiedon preferred to come a day later and remained behind with about six hundred men of his division. A moment before entering the plain of Gloucester, the dragoons of the state of Virginia came very much frightened to tell us that they had seen English dragoons outside, and that, in fear of some accident, they had come as fast as their legs could carry them, without further investigation. I went forward to try and learn more. I perceived a very pretty woman at the door of a small house, on the main road, I questioned her, she told me that, at the very moment, Colonel Tarleton had left her house; that she did not know if many troops had come out of Gloucester; that Colonel Tarleton was very anxious " to shake hands with the French Duke." I assured her that I came expressly to give him that pleasure. She was very sorry for me, thinking, I be-

lieve, by experience, that it was impossible to resist Tarleton; the American troops were of the same opinion.

I had not gone a hundred paces, when I heard my advance guards firing pistols. I advanced at full gallop to look for ground on which I could arrange my troops for battle. On arriving I perceived the English cavalry three times more numerous than mine; I charged it without stopping, and we came together. Tarleton picked me out, came to me with his pistol raised. We were going to fight between our respective troops when his horse was thrown down by one of his dragoons who was being pursued by one of my lancers. I ran on him to take him prisoner, a company of English dragoons threw itself between us and protected his retreat, his horse was left to me. He charged me a second time, without breaking my ranks; I charged him a third time, upset a portion of his cavalry, and pursued him to the intrenchments of Gloucester. He lost one officer, some fifty men, and I made a rather large number of prisoners.

M. de Choisy established his camp at a mile

and a half from Gloucester; our patrols continually exchanged shots with those of the English, and we did not sleep a single instant during the siege. As M. le baron de Viomenil was to attack two redoubts of the York works, M. de Choisy received the order to make a false attack on Gloucester; he thought he could make a real one, and carry the intrenchments sword in hand. He consequently had axes distributed to the American militia, to cut the stockades. At the first shot, half of the militia threw away their axes and guns to run faster. Thus abandoned, he withdrew on me with a few companies of French infantry, and lost a dozen men.

Two days after, Lord Cornwallis asked to capitulate. M. de Rochambeau intended to have me bear this great news to France, and sent for me. I did not care to go to Europe; I advised him to send M. de Charlus, which would reconcile him with M. de Castries, and would perhaps cause his army to be better treated. I was unable to induce him; he told him that I had had the first engagement, that I must carry the news; that as M. le comte Guillaume des Deux-Ponts had had

the second, he should carry the details; comte de Charlus never forgave him nor me. I embarked on the King's frigate *la Surveillante,* and after a voyage of twenty-two days, I reached Brest, and went to Versailles without loss of time.

CHAPTER X

CHAPTER X

(1781–1783)

On reaching Versailles, I found M. de Maurepas dying; he was hardly conscious, he recognised me, however, and received me in the most touching manner. He strongly recommended me to the King and to his ministers who promised him to carry out what he had intended to do for me. He died two days after, and M. de Castries and M. de Ségur treated me as ill as they were able.

The news gave the King the greatest joy. I found him with the Queen; he asked me many questions, and said many pleasant things to me. He asked me if I expected to return to America; I answered yes; he told me that I might assure his army that it would be perfectly well treated, better than any other had ever been. M. de Ségur was present. I replied that I was ready to

carry the favours to America in two weeks. I advised M. de Ségur to get to work with the King immediately; he told me that he wished to await the arrival of comte Guillaume des Deux-Ponts, did not hurry after that, finally did start to work with the King and told me that I should leave for Brest the following week. I asked to see the list of favours which I bore; he did not permit me to do so; I heard through the Department that the army was horribly treated.

I could besides judge of it by myself. What M. de Ségur called a great favour, was to write me on the King's behalf, that in consideration of my services in America, His Majesty permitted me to keep my regiment, on peace being declared, in the war department, as a regiment of hussars, and to bestow the command of it on me for life; this was a little less than the agreements made with me at the beginning of the war, since I was to have as mine the command of the first foreign-mounted regiment, vacant or to be organised, and less than I had at the very moment, since I was inspector of my corps. I refused to

bear the favours; M. de Ségur was shocked at this, but it gave me but little concern.

M. de Castries had treated me even worse; instead of sending me the four hundred men of my regiment left at Brest, he had arranged to send them to the conquest of the forts of Demeray and of Annamabaoo, in Africa, the most unwholesome spot in the universe; and had them remain there as a garrison until peace was declared. This clearly announced the project of depriving me of all means of serving usefully. M. de Castries, besides, did not grant the slightest favour to my regiment, not even to the officers who had brilliantly distinguished themselves.

I found Mme. de Coigny more amiable than ever, she showed interest in me, and I was unable to hold out against the irresistible inclination which drew me to her; I saw her almost every day, and every day I became more attached to her. I had never seen so much wit, so much charm which in no way resembled the wit and charm of others. I said to myself that it was

senseless to love her, that it would make me very unhappy; but no happiness attracted me so much. I was continually told that Mme. de Coigny was a coquette, that she was frivolous, that she would pitilessly make sport of anyone who should dare to love her. I have not for an instant feared that; her feeling had struck me as quickly as her mind. I did not expect to be loved by her; my heart once known could not but be pitied by her. I kept my secret, but the thought of my departure was beginning to grieve me and she had no difficulty in guessing the cause.

I met in Paris Mrs. Robinson, the Prince of Wales' first attachment, of whom the English papers had spoken so much under the name of Perdita. She was gay, lively, frank and good-natured; she did not speak French. I was an object of attraction for her, a man who had brought great news, who returned from war, who was about to go back to it: he had suffered a great deal, he still suffered much. She thought she could not do enough for him; I therefore had Perdita; I did not conceal the fact from Mme. de

Coigny. "Never mind my acts," said I to myself, "if she can read my heart."

Perdita made me fall out entirely with Mme. de Martinville. I had found her at daggers drawn, with Mme. Dillon and Mme. de Guéménée; she had tried to exact from me that I cease to see them, which I had flatly refused to do. There was a coolness between us; she learned that I had Perdita, this increased her displeasure, she told me that I must choose: cease to go to Mme. Dillon's, or cease to call on her. My choice was quickly made. Mme. de Martinville soon repented it, and wished to make up with me, but in vain.

Perdita left for England and was so desirous that I accompany her to Calais, that I could not refuse her. The sacrifice was great, for that same day I was to dine at Mme. de Gontaut with Mme. de Coigny; I wrote to Mme. de Coigny that I should not dine with her, and I took this strange opportunity to assure her that I adored her, and that no matter what happened I should adore her all my life. No other woman could

understand me. Mme. de Coigny understood me perfectly, believed me, and wrote me a few words without answering my declaration. Her conduct with me was simple and sensible; she showed me no anger because she felt none, no doubt as to my sincerity because she had none; she did not say that she would never love me.

I saw many people interested in her; some were to be feared. I was aware of all my disadvantages; I no longer had the grace nor the gaiety of youth, but I had a heart which she knew, which resembled hers very much, and I had hopes from both. I found in loving her without expectations a happiness which love had never before given me. I strove to be prudent, patient, circumspect; I was prepared to sacrifice everything without hesitation to the fear of compromising her; nothing was lost with this celestial soul, nothing escaped her, all was understood, and consequently rewarded. I did not visit Mme. de Coigny, I did not see her alone; I could rarely tell her that I loved her, but I could write it to her. I did not meet her without giving her a note; she received it with interest, without seeming to be annoyed;

I might be happier, but I knew of no one so happy as I.

At the Hôtel de Ville dinner,* Mme. de Coigny, wonderfully attired, with a large black heron's feather on the front of her gown: to see this feather and to wish it was the affair of an instant. From it I expected happiness and courage; never did errant knight desire a thing with greater ardour and purity.

M. de Coigny decided to go to America; Mme. de Coigny was in despair. I was as grief stricken as she. I did not believe that M. de Coigny's departure could cost me so much sorrow. Always true, always sensitive, Mme. de Coigny did not conceal from me either her tears, or the pity I inspired in her. She accompanied her husband as far as Rennes, she suspected that her act would be condemned; on leaving she wrote me a note which began with these words: "*Know how to defend the one whom you know so well how to love.*" Too superior not to be envied, people at-

* Dinner given to the King and Queen by the city of Paris, January 21, 1782, to end the festivities on the occasion of the birth of the Dauphin.

tempted to accuse her of exaggeration, of affectation, of deceit even; I defended her in good faith, I whom my grief had rendered so unhappy. She returned and was pleased at my conduct.

Chance had made me meet during the course of the Winter the duc de Coigny and Mme. de Châlons. I had dined at the duc de Coigny's; I called on Mme. de Coigny. I saw her almost every day at Mme. de Guéménée's, at Mme. de Gontaut's, or at her home. This happiness did not last long. M. de Ségur, with all the ill favour of which he was capable, wanted to have me leave three months before it was necessary. I dared not insist too much on waiting for the second frigate; yet this would have been a very easy matter for me. Everybody was indignant at the way the ministers were treating me.

Mme. de Polignac, who no longer feared me and for whom it was at times embarrassing to have in her company persons for whom the Queen showed kindness, appeared anxious to become more friendly. Propositions were made me to remain, people offered to supply me with the means; I refused all. It was very tempting to remain

for Mme. de Coigny; I went away on her account. I feared too much that people might guess my real reasons. I dared not even give that of the lying-in of Mme. de Montbazon, for which M. and Mme. de Guéménée were very desirous that I remain.

Mme. de Coigny was sorry at my departure. I dared believe that she loved me. She, however, did not tell me, and continued to be reasonable and strict. On the night of my departure, I cut some of her hair; she asked me to return it to her; I did so without hesitation. She took it and looked at me; I saw tears in her eyes, I had not lost everything. She alone, I trust, can form an idea of my despair when I had to go; she alone could make me feel to what extent I could be happy or unhappy. I went away, I had never done so difficult a thing; my heart was full of love, despair and confidence.

I reached Brest the day that the English squadron appeared; that did not prevent the India convoy from leaving port two days after, and from being taken within twenty-four hours. I wrote to Mme. de Coigny by every mail. I feared all my letters might bore her. I did all I could so they

should not be long. I seldom succeeded; she pitied me, she wrote to me often, that is true; I lived on her letters. I have never opened one, without a joy, a gratitude inexpressible. We remained in Brest a long time, successively kept there by the winds and by the English. I earnestly asked for that feather to which I had attached so many ideas of happiness. Mme. de Coigny replied that it was impossible to send it to me, that some day she would tell me the reason; I was thoroughly convinced that she was sorry not to give it to me; I was, however, unable to console myself for not having it.

We finally left Brest the 17th of May, in very doubtful weather and almost in sight of the English; on coming out of the inlet we were struck by a frightful gust of wind; for four days we were near being taken, or in danger of being cast against the coast; I confess that I should have been delighted at being taken. I should soon have seen Mme. de Coigny again, no war nor glory was worth that. We put in port in the Nantes River; our frigate was badly damaged. The captain of *la Gloire* sent a messenger to M. de Castries to

inform him, and to tell him that he would go to Lorient for repairs, as soon as the wind would permit. We went to Nantes. I had time to go to Paris; I wrote Mme. de Coigny to ask her if it would be possible for me to see her for a half hour. I requested her to refuse without hesitation, should she see the slightest inconvenience, and to address her reply, to be called for, at Tours or Orléans, where I should go for it; I begged her to consult no one; she was sufficient to dispose of me, and I desired her to choose the wisest decision even though it were the hardest.

I found no letter either at Tours or at Orléans. I waited, one finally came; it was from M. de Lille. He informed me that Mme. de Coigny would be delighted to see me; but that she thought it would be wiser not to come to Paris, that, however, she left it to me to decide. Not a word from Mme. de Coigny; it was so easy for her to refuse me and console me! she had refused to dispose of me; she had not had the kindness to say to me "*I do not wish it.*" She had employed a third party, she had not written to me! it was much more than was required to break my heart.

I have experienced great misfortunes. I have never felt any so sorely as I did that one; my grief was so great that for ten or twelve days I was unable to write to her.

I went to La Rochelle to see M. de Voyer, and I returned to Lorient to join my dismal frigate. Mme. de Coigny replied to my complaints with an indulgence, a graciousness which reassured me, and gave me back my peace of mind; I had nothing left but repentance for having tormented her with my troubles. Our frigate received the order to go to Rochefort and join *l'Aigle* to leave with her. I went there by land. We waited for M. de la Fayette, whom affairs had been detaining at Court for the past three weeks: he sent word that he would not come. M. de la Touche offered me his room which I accepted. We set sail on the 14th of July. The very next day, we had a serious collision with the French frigate *Cérès;* it did us much harm and came very near doing us much more. Our crew became ill; we had deaths every day, and the need of supplies for our sick obliged us to put in port at Terceira, one of the islands of the Azores.

After having taken some cattle, vegetables and water, we again set sail. Talking one day with M. de Bozan, also embarked on the *Aigle,* he spoke of Mme. de Coigny and of all her accomplishments. No conversation could be more pleasant to me; this did not last long, for he told me that M. de Chabot was in love with her, and that he did not doubt that she liked him. It was night, fortunately: *o mon Dieu!* . . . I can not think of it without a shudder; my unalterable confidence in Mme. de Coigny sustained me; she had been neither false, nor cruel, I had the strength to write her before we arrived at the Azores, and my letter left Terceira by way of Portugal. Nothing, however, could destroy the profound impression which the conservation with Bozan had made on me; I daily became more mortally sad; my strength at last gave way and I had a violent fever and delirium. I noticed it, feared to betray myself, and I forbade that anyone be allowed to enter my room, except two English servants who spoke hardly any French.

I did right, for I was solely occupied with Mme. de Coigny; I uttered her name incessantly; I

wrote to her whenever the fever left me the strength to do so; to think of her was my sole consolation. I had the good fortune of feeling all its force, thought of her letters charmed my ills, although I suffered much. I repeated continually: "My thought sustains me, I shall not die." In my delirium, I spoke of that feather I had so much desired.

I had been ill for twelve days, when we encountered in the night a vessel of seventy-four guns, with which we were obliged to fight. My room was undone, I was carried on deck more dead than alive. I had fastened the letters of Mme. de Coigny over my heart and had demanded that I be cast into the sea dressed as I was, should I be killed, or if I died during the combat. I was during three hours the useless witness of a very lively engagement. We fought throughout within reach of pistol shots and we finally compelled the English vessel to put off, after having been nearly annihilated more than a score of times. We had on our side some twenty men killed. The English vessel was in such bad condition, that we would have taken her easily,

had we not perceived on the horizon a vessel making for her. This vessel was the *Hector,* a French boat, taken from M. de Grasse, by Admiral Rodney; it sank a little while after on the banks of Newfoundland, and her crew was saved with great difficulty; we had killed more than one hundred and fifty of her men.

The next day I was more ill than ever. One week after our combat, we arrived on the coast of America, at the mouth of the Delaware. We anchored, and sent a ship's boat ashore to secure pilots, the entrance of the Delaware being difficult and dangerous. A gust of wind upset our ship's boat, and almost all those who were in it perished; no pilots came; but, at break of day, we perceived an English squadron composed of seven war vessels which was making for us at full sail: we were forced to weigh anchor, and to enter the river without a pilot. At last we saw the ship's boat of the *Gloire* coming toward us; it had met with no accident and brought back pilots. We learned through them that we were in the wrong channel, and lost without resource. M. de Latouche went two leagues

further in the channel, and, seeing that he was in a hopeless plight, he determined to send ashore the mail belonging to the Court, the money and the passengers. M. de Latouche ran aground the next day, cut down his masts, did all he could to make his frigate useless to the English, and was taken; *la Gloire,* which drew less water, after having struck a long time, finally passed through and reached Philadelphia safe and sound. We were landed at about a league from any habitation, without having taken a single shirt with us.

I still had a fever, I could hardly stand, and I should never have been able to reach a house had not a very strong negro given me his arm. As soon as we had placed the money in a safe place, I slowly turned my steps towards Philadelphia. My fever had become low; I lost consciousness every few minutes; the French and American doctors were agreed that I should die before the end of Autumn.

A vessel left for Europe; I had the occasion to write to Mme. de Coigny, this did me infinite good. The doctors had declared that it was impossible that I should think of joining the army,

when M. de Rochambeau sent one of his aides-de-camp to bring letters to chevalier de la Luzerne, and write to me to do the impossible; to come to the camp, that he had matters of the greatest importance to communicate to me. I made up my mind without consulting anyone; I mounted my horse and started for the camp; I felt that I might as well die on the road as to die in Philadelphia. The trip did me good. I was already much better when I reached general headquarters.

M. de Rochambeau was glad to see me; he told me that the greater part of his army was about to embark at Boston, that he left a few troops in America, that he himself would return to France, and that he would give me the command of his troops. The army broke camp ten or twelve days after.

I again crossed the North River, and went to take up my Winter quarters in Delaware county. I had recovered my health and my only wish was for letters, but received none.

The frigate *Danaé* returned at last; through her I learned of many misfortunes; she did not

bring me the consolation I hoped for, not a word from Mme. de Coigny; M. de Voyer was dead; I had lost Mme. Dillon. My friend M. de Guéménée had nothing left on earth; his mistress, his honour, his fortune, that of his children, that of many others, he had lost all at one time; perhaps I had lost everything myself; that was the least of my worries; I was about to leave all to go and join my unfortunate friend in whatever place he might be; considerations too long to explain here held me back.

No letters from M. nor Mme. de Guéménée; none from my men of affairs; not the slightest detail on the awful disaster. I feared that Mme. de Coigny might be ill; she had written me or else it had been impossible for her to write; I do not have to reproach myself for having suspected her of negligence for a single moment. When she alone was left to me, sure of her heart as I was of mine, I said to myself every moment: "She may not love me, she can not be unwilling to console me"; alas! at three thousand miles away from her, did she still live? my thoughts and fears varied every moment; I was tormented, I was re-

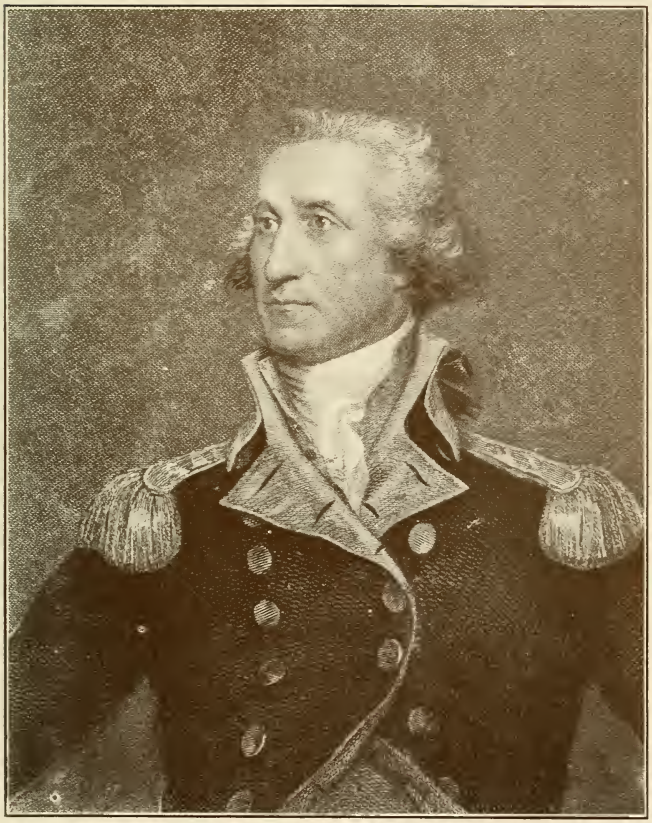
assured, everybody was not without pity; I had no confidant, but Mme. de Montbazon; M. de Lille knew that Mme. de Coigny was dear to me; they would have given me news of her at every port: a mistake of a day, a servant's forgetfulness, the irregularity of the mails had no doubt prevented me from receiving my letters; I had received none from several persons who usually wrote to me; I did not believe them to be ill, I could then hope that Mme. de Coigny was not.

Such was my cruel plight when M. de Rochambeau left for France. I wrote to Mme. de Coigny, I was certain that she would not condemn my unhappy friend; I begged her to show him some interest, he would appreciate it so much! I wrote to M. de Guéménée that he still had a friend on whom he might wholly count.

The tumult of Philadelphia had become unbearable to me, I wanted to leave it. A voyage to Rhode Island combined the advantages of bringing me nearer the letters which would probably arrive in the North, and to again see the charming family who loved me so tenderly. I therefore left in spite of the rigour of the season.

My friends in Newport exhibited inexpressible joy on seeing me once more; I saw no one else; I led a gentle and quiet life, and they took great care of me.

While I was at Newport, about the middle of the month of March, the American ship the *Washington* arrived from France at Philadelphia. Baron de Foks, my aide-de-camp, brought my letters to Newport; there were two from Mme. de Coigny, one from Spa, dated July, 1781, and another of the 18th of October of the same year. I sincerely grieved for Mme. Dillon and M. de Voyer; but Mme. de Coigny was alive and wrote to me: I might have lost her, and had not. I experienced a feeling of joy as lively as had been my grief; what letters! with what touching simplicity she described the state of her heart. She did not love M. de Chabot, she pitied me for having believed it. All the particulars which could give me back my peace of mind, she offered to me with so much charm! A word sufficed to reassure me; she had already done all I asked her with so much earnestness! She pitied M. de Guéménée, she did not condemn him; she did not



GENERAL WASHINGTON

From the Portrait by Trumbull.

say that she loved me, but she told me that she prized my sentiments for her so much, that she gave me almost as great a pleasure.

The letters that had come by the *Washington* announced that peace was as far off as ever. A week after, I learned by way of New York that it was made. I left Newport, it was not without regret and much feeling. I spent a few days with General Washington, and I returned to Philadelphia. The frigate *l'Active* brought me the order there to bring back to France the remainder of the French Army. I received at the same time a letter from Mme. de Coigny, dated September 22, 1782; it was fated that every letter I received from her should be dated back five months. I lost no time in having the troops embarked; and, on the 11th of March, 1783, we set sail from Wilmington for France.

NOTES

NOTES

[1] Fourth son of maréchal de Biron, the father of Lauzun was born Sept. 8, 1708. In 1744 he married Antoinette Crozat du Châtel, who died three years later giving birth to Lauzun. As a most intimate friend of Louis XV, M. de Gontaut had always been on very familiar terms with the royal mistresses. He was a true friend to Mme. de Pompadour.

[2] Béatrix de Choiseul-Stainville, daughter of François and of Marie-Louise de Bassompierre, born at Lunéville in 1730, was canoness of Remiremont, when she married Antoine-Antonin, duc de Grammont.

Her influence on her brother's fortune was deplorable: it is she who, owing to her opposition to Mme. du Barry, was in part the cause of his exile to Chanteloup.

She did not emigrate during the revolution and was arrested. Confined in the *Couvent des Oiseaux* with Mme. de Choiseul and Mme. du Châtelet, her indomitable pride followed even before the revolutionary tribunal. She bravely died on the scaffold April 17, 1794.

[3] She was the "idol" of Mme. du Deffand. "It is too bad that she is an angel," said the old marquise; "I should prefer her to be a woman, but she has nothing but virtues, not a weakness, not a fault."

She was the second daughter of the financier Crozat du Châtel; she had married Choiseul when fifteen years of age. Mme. de Choiseul survived her husband. On becoming a widow she attended to the payment of the enormous debts he had left and retired to the *Couvent des Récollettes*. She

was arrested during the Revolution, but the 9th Thermidor saved her. She died in 1801.

[4] The château of Ménars, situated on the Loire, at nine kilometres from Blois, was celebrated for its architecture and its magnificent gardens.

[5] Granddaughter of maréchal de Villeroy, Mlle. de Neufville-Villeroy had at fourteen years of age (1722) married M. de Boufflers. The wit, the beauty and to speak frankly the easy morals of Mme. de Boufflers had become proverbial, and it is said that even the grooms at Versailles hummed the celebrated quatrain of the Marquis de Tressan:

> "Quand Boufflers parut à la Cour,
> On crut voir la mère d'amours.
> Chacun s'empressait à lui plaire,
> Et chacun l'avait à son tour. . . ."

Mme. de Boufflers, left a widow at forty, was still the topic of the *chronique scandaleuse* when the duc de Luxembourg, grandnephew of the great marshal, had the weakness to marry her.

We must give her credit for having kept a sufficient goodness of heart to worship her granddaughter, Mlle. de Boufflers, future duchesse de Lauzun. She made of her by a masterpiece of education — the expression is Besenval's — that marvel of grace, candour and intelligence which all her contemporaries never tired of admiring.

[6] Jacques François de Montmorency, born Nov. 30, 1713, prince of Tingry and governor of Valenciennes. His third wife was Eléonor Josephine des Laurens, a cousin of the maréchale de Luxembourg. The des Laurens family had originally come from Rome.

[7] Anne-Paul de Montmorency, chevalier of Luxembourg, born Dec. 8, 1742. He was, for a time, as Lauzun and Coigny considered, a favourite of Marie-Antoinette.

[8] Louis Joachim, Paris Potier, duc de Gesvres, born May 9, 1733. He was lieutenant-general of the bailiwick of Rouen.

[9] Joseph de Croï, duc d'Havré, born Oct. 12, 1744, married Adelaïde Louise de Croï-Sobre, born Dec. 6, 1741. He was governor of Schestadt, and colonel of the regiment of Flanders-Infantry.

[10] "What rendered our position more critical was the condition of M. le Dauphin, who was then dangerously ill and almost dying, a time not very well chosen for a joke; but the King did not love his son enough to be shocked at this, nor punish us for the sake of propriety." (Lauzun's note.)

[11] Born Feb. 14, 1745, she was the daughter of Sarah Cardigan and of Charles Lenox, second Duke of Richmond, a natural descendant of Charles II of England and the beautiful Duchess of Portsmouth. In 1762, she married Thomas Charles Bunbury, created baron a few years after his marriage. Sarah Bunbury secured a divorce in 1776, then re-married in 1782; her second husband being George Napier. Reynolds and Gardner painted her portrait.

[12] Gabrielle Françoise de Chimay, born June 28, 1729, was the daughter of Alexandre Gabriel de Chimay, prince de Hénin-Liétard. She married the vicomte Jacques François de Cambis.

[13] Thomasse Thérèse de Clermont-Renel, comtesse de Choiseul-Stainville, was twenty years of age when this took place (Jan. 21, 1767). She was confined in a convent at Nancy, where she remained until she died. The conduct of Stainville was almost generally condemned. Nothing was done to Clairval, the actor.

[14] Corsica was ceded to France, by the Republic of Genoa, in 1768. When the population of Ajaccio saw the French flag waving over the Château, it was at first delighted, but the edicts of M. de Narbonne which forbade the sale of ammunition soon made the Corsicans distrustful.

In Bastia, while M. de Narbonne was holding celebrations

to proclaim Louis XV king of France, of Navarre and of Corsica, the troops of Paoli refused to lay down their arms. It was then that Louis XV selected M. de Chauvelin to command a new expedition.

[15] Chardon (Daniel Marc-Antoine) born in 1730. Chardon was a man of brilliant qualities, but of very lax morals.

[16] Mlle. Audinot, *danseuse* of the Opéra, was less celebrated for her talent than for her charms. It is reported that on the fall of Choiseul, she offered Lauzun four thousand *louis,* her entire fortune, for the exiled minister. Lauzun refused it.

[17] Prince de Conti had a château there on the right bank of the Oise. It was a building of brick and stone, in the Louis XIII style. Magnificent terraces descended to the edge of the water. This château was demolished during the Revolution.

[18] The domain of Chanteloup was situated on a height, between the Loire and a beautiful forest, at some distance from Amboise. It was a truly royal residence when the intrigues of Maupeou, of Aiguillon and of Mme. du Barry had brought about the fall of the minister whom a *lettre de cachet* from the King exiled (Dec. 24, 1770), Chanteloup became the refuge of the duc and the duchesse de Choiseul. Their departure from the capital, accompanied by a cortege of friends, amidst the cheers of the people assembled even on the roofs, was a veritable triumph.

[19] Lauzun had entered the *gardes françaises* Jan. 18, 1761, at the age of twelve, with the rank of flag ensign. He was later made sub-lieutenant, and, on the occasion of his marriage, lieutenant.

[20] Born in 1743, Isabelle Fortunée Flemming, who, through her father, descended from an old Saxon family, had, by her marriage to prince Adam Casimir, entered into that ancient Galician house of the Czartoryskis which lay claim to the throne of Poland. She was a musician, an artist, and pos-

sessed of many accomplishments. She died at Sienawicz, in Galicia, June 17, 1835, aged ninety-two.

[21] Adrien Louis Bonnières de Souhasta, comte, then duc de Guines, after having served in the Grenadiers of France during the Seven Years War, was made general at twenty-seven. He entered diplomacy in 1768 as plenipotentiary at Prague, and was sent as ambassador to London two years after.

[22] Mlle. de Saint-Léger later married prince Adalbert de Périgord, brother of prince de Chalais.

[23] The *Légions,* established on the model of that of maréchal de Saxe, called *Légion de Saxe,* were all composed of foreigners. From 1743 to 1761, some were composed of foot-soldiers, others of hussars, others of lighthorse. In the war of 1756, there were as many as six *légions:* Royale, Flandre, Lorraine, Condé, Soubise, Dauphiné.

Lauzun had purchased from the comte de Coigny the post of colonel of the *Légion Royale* for the sum of 150,000 *livres,* as proven by a note dated March 16, 1774.

The *Légion Royale* was garrisoned at Mouzon, a small town in the department of Ardennes, on the river Meuse.

[24] The Czartoryskis, in 1770, had built there a superb château which they filled with works of art and priceless objects. This château was destroyed during the revolution in Poland.

To-day, Powonski is the cemetery of Warsaw.

[25] Lauzun is anxious to enter the diplomatic field. He dreams of the embassy at Warsaw. He withdraws to Mouzon among books, sends report on report to Vergennes, then, when he finds himself at Warsaw for the lying-in of princesse Czartoryska, he unmasks his batteries. Through Stackelberg, Russian ambassador to Poland, Lauzun seeks to put himself in communication with Catherine II. His aim is to detach Russia from the Prussian alliance and have her sign a treaty with France assuring the integrity of Poland. His chief means: the Queen's favour.

Because of the reputed influence of Lauzun with Marie-Antoinette, Frederick II proposed to have him appointed ambassador at Berlin, and Catherine does all in her power to attach him to her. Even when negotiations are broken and when France is about to engage itself in the struggle for American independence, both are anxious to keep within their reach a means of influence in the French court. But M. de Vergennes fears what may result from the Queen's influence, and attentively following Lauzun's efforts, seeks to hinder them by exigencies, by delays, until the day when he substitutes one of his intimates, M. de Paiges, to Lauzun. Two years later, when Lauzun, who on his own account, had continued his correspondence with Stackelberg, expressly asked for the embassy of Poland, become vacant through the departure of M. de Montmoun for Madrid, Vergennes still refuses.

[26] Charles Gravier de Vergennes had held for thirteen years the embassy of Constantinople and had suddenly been recalled through the influence of Choiseul. It may be supposed that he was not well disposed towards Lauzun who had been and still was a member of the Choiseul coterie.

[27] Claude Louis, comte de Saint-Germain, is celebrated for the reform which he tried to introduce in the French Army. He was born at Verthamboz, April 15, 1707, and died at Paris, Jan. 15, 1778.

[28] The regiment *Royal-Dragons* had been organised in 1668.

[29] Founded at the Palais-Royal by Mme. de Genlis who wrote its by-laws, the *Ordre de la Persévérance* held its meetings every two weeks in the garden of a little house full of gallant recollections and which Lauzun owned at Montrouge. Later, when the order of which he had been the third chevalier had disappeared, he asked Mme. de Genlis for the by-laws, so that he might give them to the marquise de Coigny. With the consent of Mme. de Genlis, the by-laws remained in the possession of Mme. de Coigny.

[30] Lauzun had long been struck by the importance of English commerce in Africa, and by the weakness of the forts which protected the coast. He sent a report of these conditions to M. de Sartines, and proposed to him the conquest of Senegal and of the numerous settlements on the coast of Guinea. A few days after he obtained an audience with the minister and succeeded in bringing him to his way of thinking. An expedition to India is contemplated; a few vessels were to be taken from the fleet and Senegal and Gambia seized.

The supreme command and all military operations are to be Lauzun's, while M. de Vaudreuil, commander of the fleet, was to receive besides, the mission of taking the English settlements on the coast of Sierra Leone.

Lauzun received his orders Nov. 28, 1778. He was preparing to carry them out when an order reached him requesting his presence at Versailles: M. de Bruy was not to go to India. Nevertheless, Lauzun secured permission to start and with the greatest secrecy the conquest of Senegal is again decided upon.

It was Dec. 25, 1778, that the fleet left Quiberon. It was composed of the vessels *Sphynx* and *Fendant,* having on board Lauzun and Vaudreuil, two frigates, three corvettes and one schooner.

[31] Louise Marthe de Conflans d'Armentières, married in 1775, to François de Franquetot, marquis de Coigny, was one of the most remarkable women of her time. The liveliness of her wit retained near her all those who had been attracted by her beauty. After the "Affair of the Necklace," Mme. de Coigny left the Court, where her independent character was not liked, and went to Paris, whose queen she soon became by her wit: "I am Queen in Versailles," said Marie-Antoinette with envy, "but Mme. de Coigny is Queen in Paris." To assure her safety she was compelled to flee from France during the Revolution. In her exile she con-

tinued to correspond with Lauzun until August, 1792. In 1802, Mme. de Coigny returned to France. The death of Lauzun, and that of her daughter Fanny, came to darken her later years: she died in 1832, at the age of seventy-three.

[32] Lauzun kept his regiment of dragoons but two years. When France decided to intervene in the war for American independence, he asked to be transferred to marine service, while retaining his rank of brigadier-general in the land troops. In August 1778, he raised for the service of the navy and the colonies, Lauzun's Legion of Foreign volunteers, which comprised eight companies of infantry and two of hussars, amounting in all to four thousand men, of which he had command. This corps included Poles and Irish. Lauzun's volunteers figured honourably on the American battle fields: the hussars, specially, distinguished themselves; Rochambeau's sole cavalry was composed of two squadrons of lancers, new then, and Lauzun's two squadrons. Their service was particularly hard. The Legion returned to Brest, June 11, 1783.

[33] Comtesse Dillon, née Lucie de Roth or Roothe. Her beauty had first struck Lauzun, in 1763, when he had met her at a ball at the maréchale de Mirepoix's. Mlle. de Roth had married comte Arthur Dillon, who distinguished himself in America, and who was to die on the scaffold in 1794. She herself died in 1782, while Lauzun was in America.

[34] This squadron under M. le chevalier de Terney was composed of two vessels of eighty guns, one of seventy-four, four of sixty-four, and two frigates.

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